Śaiva Philosophy of Kashmir

S.N. Kaul

Shamboo Nath Kaul was the eldest son of the great educationist, Late Pt. Shivajee Kaul Gassi, resident of Sathu Barbarshah, Srinagar, Kashmir. He was a class-I officer in Indian Customs and Central Excise in the Revenue Department of the Government of India. During his lifetime, he came in contact with a number of great saints and sages who blessed him to attain spiritual enlightenment. A true *karmayogī* and Bhairava *upāsaka* with consciousness assuming a self-effacing personality, well-read and surprised educated people by the shear breath of his knowledge; his immense fortitude, inner strength and nobility of spirit, love, passion is worth of emulation. He received inspiration to write this book from the late Ishwarswaroop Swami Lakshmanjoo in order to express his devotion and dedication towards him.

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The goal and purpose in writing this book is to highlight, in the midst of diversity, the essential unity that seems to be constitutive of such religions that have an orientation that is deeply mystical. Basing himself on the absolutistic metaphysical thought of Kashmir Śaivism, the author thereby has attempted to interpret spirituality in such universal terms as would enable one to discover the principle of unity of Being among the spiritualities of all major religions. Thus the aim of the book is so noble as to allow the reader to have the vision of unity in the midst of diversity.

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Swami Gopi Nath Bhan Maharaj (Bhagavana)

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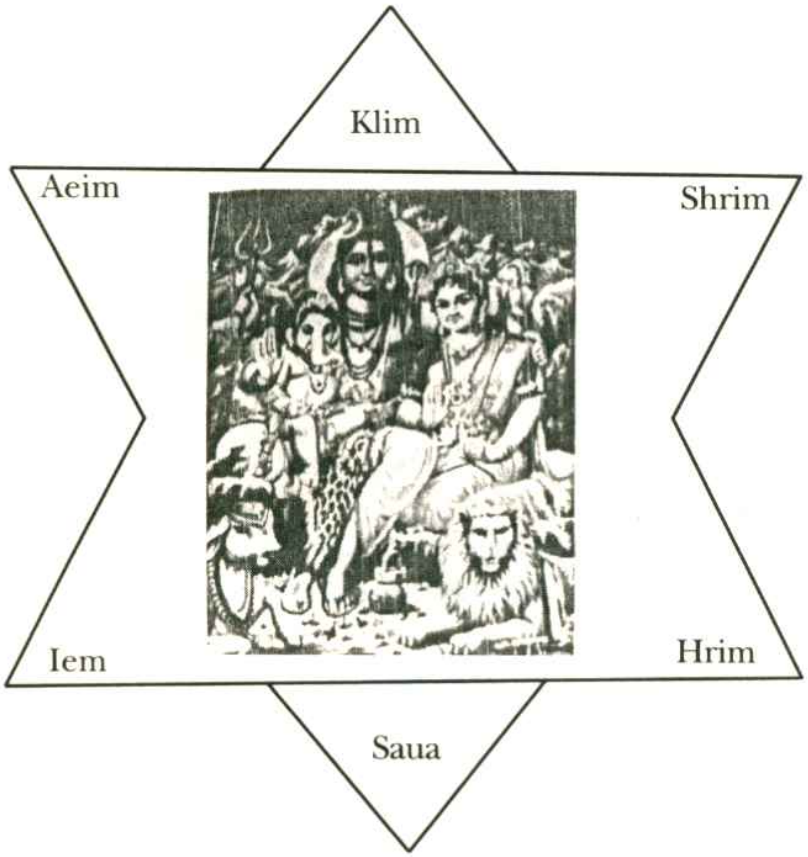

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To the dear memory of the
great Śaiva saint of twentieth century,
Late Swami Gopi Nath Bhan Maharaj
popularly known as Bhagavana

Contents

	Illustrations	ix
	Foreword	xi
	Introduction	xv
1	Religion and Spirituality	1
2	Aryan Vedic Dharma or Hindu Religion	17
3	Birth of Śaiva Philosophy and Advaita Vedānta	29
4	Trika Philosophy of Kashmir	44
5	Pratyabhijñā or the Doctrine of Recognition	50
6	Identification of the Individual Self with Śiva	61
7	The Doctrine of Spanda	69
8	Śakti-mārga	75
9	Islam and Sufism	88
10	Christianity with Reference to Śaivism	104
11	Tantra and Miracles	112
12	Bhoga and Mokṣa (Enjoyment and Salvation)	122
	Index	131

Illustrations

1. Kuṇḍalinī 85
2. Cakras 86

Foreword

THE AUTHOR of this monograph has made an effort at exploring in depth such experiential aspects of spirituality that would unify the differing dogmatic assertions of various religions within the crucible of mystical awareness of non-difference. As to whether such an effort has borne out the required fruit depends on the acceptance or rejection of the arguments the author has offered in support of his thesis that maintains that the essential nature of every kind of mystical experience is characterised by the awareness of unity of Being.

Although the effort of the author may be commendable, yet the fact remains that religions differ among themselves on essential points of doctrine and spirituality, which would mean that whatever kind of spirituality a particular religion may propound, it is basically driven by its ideological framework. If a religious ideology, for

example, were theistic, it would be impossible for such an ideology to accept the assertion that reality is non-dualistic. It is so because theism looks at reality as being totally "the other," which would mean that there exists such a transcendent gap between Reality and Appearance as would be impossible to bridge. It is, thus, necessary to be aware of the essential differences that exist between religions as well as between the various mystical schools of thought.

Even mystical spirituality vries from religion to religion. There are such mystical schools that are purely naturalistic, and such schools can never be brought into the framework of experience that is religious in orientation. There are also mystical schools that have no need of God. Therefore, it would be improper to assert that religious ideology is basically driven by a spirituality that is either mystical or is characterised by the experience of non-duality.

The present book would have served its purpose in a better way if the author had also taken into consideration the differences that exist between the various religions of the world. Even in its present format the author could have explored suchbasic theoretical principles of Kashmir Śaivism that would have, both in terms of metaphysical thought and mystical experience, proved to be so enlightening as to terminate in the elimi-

nation of conceptual as well as perceptual experience of difference. The author could have achieved the intended goal had he explored the vast range of metaphysical thought that Kashmir Śaivism has given birth to. The Trika Śaivism of Kashmir is not only absolutistic, but is also theistic in orientation. Combining both theism and absolutism within is womb, Kashmir Śaivism is in a position of providing the necessary hermeneutical wherewithal whereby both theism and absolutism could be so synthesized as would result in the maintenance of the worldview that both theism and absolutism have given birth. This could have been achieved had the author followed strictly the theoretical framework that Abhinavagupta has worked out.

It is hoped that the reader will obtain the necessary stimulus for exploring further the nature and content of spirituality that is in intent and content mystical. Also it is hoped that the reader may be so inspired as would allow him to plunge into the ocean of metaphysical thought that Kashmir Śaivism has propounded through such luminaries as Vasugupta, Kallaṭa, Somānandan, Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta, and so on.

MOTI LAL PANDIT

New Delhi
July 15, 2008

Introduction

BASIC FEATURES of Kashmir Śaiva Philosophy, known as Trika Philosophy, leading to enlivening of man's consciousness, are condensed in a simple language understandable by a layman of any faith or religion, or even by any non-believer. Philosophy is not, strictly speaking, a religious code of what is to be done and what not, and is neither dogmatic nor fundamentalist. It is a philosophy of man's possibilities to vitalize and strengthen his powers within, particularly his mind and intellect, so that an orderliness of consciousness, by removing the veils of ignorance, delusion, ego, and self, which limit its functioning, is secured. Only then can he unfold his personality in which the intellect becomes the source of inspiration, leading to intuition which works as the Third Eye of Śiva.

Human nature is the same everywhere. Slight

differences are due to differences of education, environment, and breeding. In so far urges, strains, compulsions, and pressures on the one hand, and aims, ambitions, and aspirations on the other are concerned, they are almost identical. Śaiva Philosophy is the result of observation, self-examination, contemplation, and self-revelation by seers and thinkers, in which nature within man and outside in cosmos came up for study, to understand the action, interaction and reaction of both on one another, as both are subtly and intricately linked. It was found that when man's intellect and mind can cope with all the actions, reactions and interactions, then only can one find harmony within himself and in the environment outside in which human relationship is significantly important. In the ultimate analysis, he reaches the conclusion that man is himself Reality and then the assertions of "Thou art That" or "I am He" become meaningful and understandable.

Consciousness of man, whether he is a recluse or a man of the world, a saint or an average man, pious or sinful, young or old, is involved in meeting the challenges posed by three compulsions of human nature: (1) Desire, (2) Perception, and (3) Action. Monistic Śaiva Philosophy gives a proper direction to enable

man to face these challenges of human nature, and then steer the course of his life in a smooth and orderly way; and, in the end, understand and realize the one Reality behind this empirical phenomenon. Different religions are different paths to reach the same common ground of one Reality, but dogmas, prejudice, and partisanship have hampered the journey, and thus, man's consciousness and intellect have got stuck in narrow grooves of religions. Śaiva Philosophy is a bold attempt to liberate man's consciousness and intellect and to direct both these on to the spiritual plane where the one Reality of all men and all religions is, and which is the common goal of religions to reach. Man's consciousness of awareness of Reality transcends religion, and alertness to maintain this awareness is *ipso facto* born.

This treatise has been written with three objectives. The first and primary is to diffuse knowledge among the bulk of Kashmiri Pandits, who migrated to India and other foreign places from 1947 onwards. In 1947 about three hundred thousand Kashmiri Pandits lived in Kashmir, and now after forty years only fifty or sixty thousand remain there. About two hundred and fifty thousand have migrated and are dispersed in small pockets and batches in various towns, cities

of India, and in foreign countries such as England, America, and other places. This ethnic group of Hindus is perhaps one of the smallest groups, if not the smallest, in India now. It has a distinctive identity of its own on account of distinctive culture and separate language which has been born as a result of Śaiva Philosophy from the fourth century AD, and which has come as a rich ancestral heritage to the present generation and will pass on to the future generations. This heritage is responsible for making Kashmiri Pandits what they are today with this distinctive identity, in which their intellectual, educational, and mental qualities of accommodation and adjustment skill are apparent, and which alone have enabled them to survive inspite of multifarious vicissitudes and trials through which they had to pass. The exodus in bulk of about seventy-five per cent of its total numbers to far and distant places is no doubt a matter of great concern, as the feeling of losing homeland and therewith their moorings, haunts them, and it is apprehended that the distinctive identity and characteristics which they have, may be lost, or dissolved in the cultures and ways of living of the distant places far and wide, where destiny and circumstances have taken them. They should, however, remember that as long as distinctive

identity and characteristics are safe-guarded and maintained, there is no danger to their survival, and in flowering and acquiring name and fame, as have those who migrated in small numbers, but in worse condition from fourteenth century to eighteenth century, and who have shone on the Indian horizon by producing great leaders, politicians, adminis-trators, lawyers, judges, and men of letters, art and sciences. Their examples are before them, and they should feel both encouraged and assured. This small treatise in simple language on Śaiva Philosophy is, therefore, a ready reminder for them and for their future generations. It will be a useful guide to them to know what the basis of their culture has been. By knowing about it, the importance of safe-guarding their identity for survival, as also for securing honour and name for themselves and for the community in general can be understood. If identity is lost, then everything is lost, and this small ethnic group who will no more be there. Parsis are an equally small ethnic group, who got scattered from their homeland likewise, but exist and flourish, because they have maintained and safeguarded their identity.

My second objective is to explain that Śaiva Philosophy is a philosophy for man as a human being, and can be availed of by any man,

anywhere, of any faith or caste, and even by a man who is an atheist or agnostic. It is a philosophy showing how man can unfold himself, and be and behave like a human being, in whom the spirit of humanitarianism and rationalism get so linked as to enable him to raise the level of his consciousness and acquire not only universal, but even super consciousness, free from the limitations of time, space, and casuality. All this becomes possible when mind and intellect are cleared of the cobwebs that restrict their functioning. Every man can draw from this philosophy and benefit from it.

India is probably the only country whose inhabitants are significantly multi-religious and multi-caste. In-fights, clashes and riots cannot be ruled out, inspite of our government's best efforts. Economic, political and social rivalries and interests cut across, and are masqueraded under religion and caste. The picture is dismal, as these violent clashes and riots get frequently repeated, resulting in the disintegration and dismemberment of society. An ideological change is immediately the greatest need of the hour, and that also on mass scale. It is then only that there can be some hope of a smooth and harmonious relationship.

Monistic Śaiva Philosophy aims at enlivening

man's consciousness, disciplining his mind, and unfolding his potentialities so as to seek unity in diversity. Harmony within man and outside in the environment, in which human relationship is of utmost importance, are the first requisites to achieve the aim. For this purpose qualities of toleration, fellow feeling, forbearance, understanding, sympathy and love, are to be cultivated and developed in one's nature, and then only can humanitarianism and rationalism be the guiding principles of thinking, behaving, and acting. Śaiva Philosophy's principles and teachings have the potentiality and vitality to bring about ideological change, provided realized mystics, saints and sufis, and their organizations if they have one, could undertake the job. In haydays of yore philosophy was taught by the master (*guru*) to his disciples (*śiṣyas*) generally in homes, and this system constituted the basic substratum of Indian culture. This system stopped because of drastic historical convulsions, as also drastic changes in man's aims and ambitions due to technological advance, which attracted and lured man to seek and run after material gains at the cost of spiritual advancement. Now neither many realized mystics, saints, and sufis are there, nor disciples to learn are there. Besides this, there is neither time nor leisure nor inclination. However, the quickest, easiest, and the most effective way to

achieve some sort of ideological change is the one that is demonstrated by Sat Sai Baba and his organization. Millions of people of different religions, beliefs, and races in and outside India have been changed ideologically, have become the saint's followers, and worship him. His main teaching constitutes adoption of basic eternal truths, viz., truth, non-violence, righteousness, love, purity, sympathy and forgiveness, which when adopted and made part of one's nature can ensure the needed environmental harmony. His organization is spread far and wide in and outside India and the followers of almost all faiths and religions have become his votaries. Saints of Ramakrishna Mission, Maheshyogi's transcendental meditation centres, Hari Kishna Hari Rama organization, and other sufis and mystics are contributing to the saint's work in their own way. The teachings of Sat Sai Baba and other organizations are a sure antidote to the prevailing malady, which is the result of both crises in faith and crisis in character in man. These saints, mystics, and sufis have to be approached, entreated, encouraged, and persuaded to come out into the open to save man and society. Their teachings are effective, because they are not personally involved, and there is not a partisan, dogmatic, or fanatical approach. They draw man's attention to eternal truths and basic everlasting

values on the spiritual plane, and create an awareness and alertness within man's consciousness and mind *en masse*, which ideologically transforms him, and opens and widens his vision and outlook. Man is free to follow his religious traditions and rites as he chooses, but his consciousness, his imagination and his intellect get a direction that goes beyond and above religion, which is a plane where there is no difference between man and man, where all are one and equal, and where all can find and understand the purpose and meaning of life. Political, social, and religious leaders of society could also help in securing the harmonious environment provided they are truly sincere, and actually do what they profess. They say one thing, do the opposite, have personal involvements, have not risen above selfish and egoist urges and demands. On the other hand, realized mystics, saints, and sufis have forsaken the self, subdued ego, and bestowed their grace and kindness in equal measure without discrimination of religion, caste, and race. This is my third objective in writing this treatise to move public opinion in this behalf.

1

Religion and Spirituality

FEAR, uncertainty, anxiety, suffering, disease, and want stimulated mankind from the very beginning to probe the mysteries of the universe, and to unravel hows and whys of the baffling phenomenon. In despair and heplessness, man started finding a remedy to rid himself of the ills and sufferings by means of inherent thinking power in him, as distinct from other living objects of the world. Philosophies and religions are, therefore, the outcome of such thinking and meditative exercises, which developed from generation to generation in different countries at different times.

Apart from this reason, the intelligent amongst men were and are struck by the baffling and

wonderful universe, in which infinite time is moving, from eternity to eternity, without stopping. Vast space is infinite, as its limits are not known, as also the vast and huge layers of matter, visible and hidden, apparently also not fully measured, exist, besides a sky having a sun, a moon, and innumerable stars in our galaxy, which illumine and provide light.

This world is said to be only a part of this universe. In the puzzling and wonderful phe-nomena, life gets created in the form of human beings, animals, birds, insects, fishes. Human being alone is erect having two legs, two hands, body and walks on his two legs, and uses two hands enabling him to work with his body, erect (vertically) as against other creatures, who are horizontal, either with four legs, or have wings, or two feet or are creeping. Human being amongst all the creatures alone is gifted with the power of thinking and understanding, supplying motive for his action and movement, while animals and other creatures move and are active under instinctive urges alone for survival, that is, to satisfy their hunger, thirst, lust and to find out a place for shelter where they may be comfortable against the vagaries of climate and weather, etc.

The power of thinking or intellect, providing motive force to human being, is called con-

sciousness, and man is conscious of this consciousness. Human being, in consequence, acquired a mind, senses (five of intelligence and five of action), and this moved him to desire with an intention to yearn for knowledge and to work and be active. Such a mind under the influence and guidance of intellect, which contains the spark of soul or life principle or spirit is expected to work rightly, to decide what to accept and what to reject, what to do and what not to do. Human being becomes the doer, chooser and judge for himself. This sort of mobility and activity of mind is distinctive from the instinctive urges of animals, which human being also has, as instinctive urges are similar and alike with all life.

In the world, which is a part of the vast universe of wonders, life, death, creation, preservation, and destruction are continuous processes, and this adds to amazing wonder of the universe which generates puzzling curiosity, which naturally stirs, and moves the imagination of thinking man at large, more particularly among those who possess sharp intellect, who from start have been trying to solve the riddles, puzzles of the universe and want to know the hows and whys of this world. If life is a puzzle, death is more so, as it is certain and more generally creates suffering, sorrow, misery, want, and other difficulties.

Both the average man and the intellectual man are probing in dark. So far no final or convincing solution or reply is found and it is doubtful if any assuring reply can ever be found.

In the initial stages, the ills and evils of suffering, want, disease, and the like were attributed to the vagaries of elements of nature, and so people took to propitiate these elements out of fear. Such a religion born of fear of elements is restricted to the propitiation of elements by offerings and sacrifices. The elements were deified and worshipped. With the passage of time, these sacrifices, rituals, offerings, and propitiations were found incapable to avert the ills and sufferings. But curiosity and wonder with intellectuals continued notwithstanding. Then the thinkers went further ahead with their meditations and finally reached the conclusion that there is some higher power than these elements and forces. This higher power was called God whose propitiation by worship, sacrifices and rituals was resorted to in order to obtain His benign spiritual protection from the ills and sufferings.

For average human being this sentiment of fear is, no doubt, consistent with devotion of a certain kind. At its highest, it so used the worship of the divine power of God as to introduce the concept of hell and heaven: the former to be avoided and

the latter to be achieved as the final goal of human quest. But this, too, was an unsatisfying idea, and human soul did not stop there, as even with these concepts, the ills and sufferings did not perish, and man continued to remain sceptical. The curiosity of the intelligent amongst humans continued.

Naturally, not being satisfied with the worship of God, deeper meditation and probing was resorted to, and then man came to realize that inner nature of man bears a relation with nature in cosmos.

Both natures act, interact, and react on one another. They also realized that if outer nature in cosmos is macroform, the corresponding nature in the humans is microform. Both are identical, and accordingly interplay and interact to find harmony and accord. These observations and experiences of thinkers and seers came to be recorded, and became the basis of religious philosophies.

The more intelligent amongst human beings came to these conclusions. These conclusions were explained to the average man who also put faith in them.

Religion is neither magic nor superstition. It is only a philosophy and is an attempt at finding a rational approach to the problems that one is confronted with and is, therefore, rooted in

experience and observation. Even then, it has not proved a panacae for ills and doubts, suffering and misery, that still persist. The failure of religion to finally rid man of these uncertainties and troubles, and remove the curiosity of intelligence is attributed to its inadequacy, or to its exaggerated expectations. But neither reason is correct. The religious principles are not inadequate, and if they do not yield the expected results, the failure to achieve the results is due to human failing. Human being behaves like a hypocrite in showing outward allegiance to the religion, but in the heart of hearts not believing or trusting it in a sincere, true, and faithful way. It is mistaken for observances of rituals and ceremonies, acceptance of dogmas, for outward show and consumption, while at heart no faith or trust in religion as such is there. The average man and the intellectual man are not satisfied even now. The sufferings and uncertainties of life, the inevitability of death and also with it the curious nature of the Pandora's box that this universe is, still persists. Human being is tossed hither and thither by fear, uncertainty, hope, want, starvation, and such ills. Hope remain distant from fulfilment, while fears are there still. Human being is neither satisfied nor happy.

Man forgets that religion lays down a code of

conduct and discipline to bring about behavioural change, so as to secure harmony with elements and the forces of the universe. Complete eradication of these ills can be possible only when God, the fundamental Reality or Spirit, Who is the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction, is realized.

Of course, religion helps to mitigate the influence of evils and sufferings to the extent man is capable to achieve harmony with his own inner nature and with the outer nature by means of moulding his outlook and behaviour. By living a religious life, according to the prescribed norms and codes, man tries to develop and build up his own infrastructure in accordance with his nature, so that harmony and accord is achieved. When this harmony is achieved, then suffering and ills will not effect him so much, as he will not feel disturbed and troubled by them. This is the function of all religious philosophies, codes of conduct, and disciplines. Ultimate and outright freedom from ills is essentially a matter of spirituality. So long as man does not follow and observe religious principles and precepts which are almost common to all religions and philosophies, he can not qualify to enter the realm of the spirit. Religion is one thing and spirituality another. But to achieve the latter, one must have

faith in the observance of codes of conduct and discipline for the control of mind, senses, feelings and thoughts.

There are at present four main religions in the world, claiming almost the entire population under the influence of one or the other. Besides these, there are some philosophies or faiths, but they are on regional basis and do not cover or encompass sizeable following. These philosophies are also about codes of conduct and disciplines for man. The four big religions in chronological order are: (1) Vedic Religion of Aryans or Hinduism, (2) Buddhism, (3) Christianity, and (4) Islam. All these religions have more or less common principles of ethics and morals, in terms of sins and virtues, denounce sins and unrighteousness. All religious philosophies underline the principles of truth, love, non-violence, peace, righteousness. These are the hallmarks for a pious, everyday living, which every normal man yearns for. The codes of discipline for mind, thoughts and feelings are also similar, with slight variation here and there; and also these religions, excepting Buddhism and Jaina philosophy, point out and admit the existence of an Ultimate Reality, viz., Hinduism—Paramātmā, Śiva or Brahman; Christianity—God; and Islam—Allāh, which is the final goal and objective

of a human being. Buddhists and Jainas have similar, even stricter, codes of conduct and discipline, but they admit no God or *Īśvara.* Their claim is that, by following the path of righteousness with sincerity and by observing the disciplines and codes of conduct truthfully, one can get enlightenment and ultimate freedom or *nirvāṇa.* Hinduism also puts freedom or *mukti* as the final objective. Both Hinduism and Buddhism claim that spirit is immortal, while physical body is perishable. They also believe in past *karmas* (actions), determining future births till *mukti* or *nirvāṇa* is achieved. Christianity and Islam believe in the Resurrection of the dead. Achieving the goal of Ultimate Reality is recognized nevertheless by all.

The need for religion or philosophies is to make life purposeful, meaningful and understandable. So long as religion reacts to the needs of time, conditions, events and ideas, it serves the purpose. But in changing conditions, with fresh developments and changing modes of living, which religion cannot cope with, then its purpose is not served. Religion which fosters discord and disharmony is worthless. Bereft of all dogmas, rituals, practices and ceremonies, all the religions agree on one Reality, man and world, and their interconnection and interrelation. This aspect is

basic and is the spiritual principle. If a man has to be and then to live in this world, he has to be like a lotus in water, untainted by its wetness, and it is then only that he can hope to realize Reality. Castes, creeds and classes in society are man-made to serve selfish purposes. This is exploitation of the lower by the higher, of the weaker by the stronger, of the poor and helpless by the rich and powerful; otherwise there are no such distinctions and differences. Any man is just as good or bad as any other. So when Reality is realized, the need and utility of religion is left in the background. Sinful thoughts, feelings, and actions disappear and are consistently replaced by righteous thoughts, feelings and actions without flinching. When such a state becomes ingrained as a part of one's nature, then man is said to be living in the Divine or Kingdom of Heaven. It is, therefore, then that man can awaken God-consciousness and try to realize it. It requires not only awakening, but alertness and awareness every moment of life. In such a state of oneness of all men, irrespective of caste, creed, and colour, the oneness and the universality of soul or spirit is recognized and accepted. This state of man's mind would make him believe and trust not only in the oneness of all men, but of a unity in diversity, in which all the objects of the world,

animate and inanimate, will be seen as reflecting the effulgence of that one Reality. This belief, when firmly rooted in man, will *suo moto* eliminate disputes, bigotism, fanaticism and create interreligious, inter-caste and inter-class toleration, understanding and cooperation. This close and clear understanding is much more needed now when the world is shrinking and its different parts are coming closer by means of quicker and easier means of transport and communication, because of which disputes and frictions are frequent and recurring.

It is, therefore, a matter of utmost importance to project and foster faith in one common Reality for all religions and to propagate it vigorously. This philosophy of one Reality, man and universe is *summum bonum* of all religious philosophies in their attempt to solve the astonishing phenomena of universe and life in it. All philosophies and teachings are intended to strike a harmonious balance in the relationship of these three, and thereby enabling man to realize the unknown and unseen Reality by means of living in the world of objects, forces, and pressures. In realising this ideal, every religion has something useful to offer, which should be availed of with advantage. This is how Kashmiri Śaiva philosophers thought, believed and acted upon.

Amongst the four religions of the world, the Vedic religion of the Aryans is the oldest claiming its origin thousands of years ago after their settlement in India. It was followed by Buddhism with the birth of Buddha in 520 BC. It spread quickly in China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia in the north and east of India and north-west to Kashgar, Afghanistan. Central Asia and even Iran and to Ceylon to the south of India. But it was thousands of years after Vedic Ārya Dharma that Buddhism was followed by Christianity, about 2000 years ago in the Middle Eastern countries of Jerusalem and Palestine, but spread to the whole of Europe, thereby uprooting paganism, Roman culture, and Roman gods and deities, as most of Europe was part of the Roman Empire till then. Islam was born in Arab countries, and spread there from about seventh century, bringing under its influence instantly all Arab countries and spread out to Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, and Egypt, and thereby replacing Buddhism in these countries and even penetrated into India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. With the exception of Sanatana Dharma of Hindus, all the other main religions as also regional philosophies, i.e., Confucianism. Taoism, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism came to existence from the fifth century BC to the seventh

century AD. So this period is called an era of upsurge of religions of the world and significantly all of them were born in Asia.

The main reason for the upsurge of religious philosophies, during this period is due to the great dissatisfaction felt in different parts of the world with living conditions, which were causing suffering, want, disease and misery. The desire of relieving and mitigating these evils, at different times and under different conditions, brought about religions and philosophies to enable man to stand and rise above these evils and ills by living harmoniously and by reforming the social order. In pursuit of this objective, the existence of a fundamental principle in nature, called God by diferent religions except by Buddhism, was recognized. Hindus, Christians, and Muslims have their respective traditions, customs, rituals, and ceremonies of worship. Buddhism tried to eliminate rituals and ceremonies to a considerable extent, laying stress only on securing right balance with specific codes of disciplines. With the development of human nature and the inner potentialities of man, under the codes of discipline and practices, a harmony and balance with outer nature or cosmic nature can be struck which will enable one to mitigate suffering and miseries, or to face them confidently, so as to

contain them and not to be thrown off the feet or driven to desperation. This is the main and common concept of all religious philosophies. While other religions are based on faith, on that fundamental Reality or God, the utmost need of securing harmony and balance in two natures is the main problem for realizing God and His Divinity. Development of man's behaviour, unfoldment, and realization of His potentialities is, therefore, the main purpose of all religions and philosophies.

The five elements, sun, moon, and stars and all the other forces are functioning in cosmos in an impartial and unattached manner, showering their beneficencies to everybody in the world in equal measure without discrimination of religion, caste, and colour. They are just the same for rich and poor, high and low, virtuous or vicious, pious or sinner. Man should have learnt a lesson from this impartial and dispassionate working of elements and should have eliminated differences between man and man; but sadly he has become instrument and architect of social barriers and differences, which breed hatred, greed, jealousy, rivalry, leading to the worst crimes. Man is himself responsible for polluting the environment and creating this disharmony. His selfishness, ego, and ignorance prevent him

from taking right and proper action for maintaining a harmonious outlook, and this is the greatest paradox of the world. Reality has unleashed forces and elements and having set up Eternal Cosmic laws for governing their functioning, and thereby had offered concrete, intelligible and impressive examples for man's functioning in an unattached way; but tragedy is that he becomes the cause of distorting the environment, which ultimately leads to his fall and degredation resulting in ills, evils and miseries. So long as man does not realize his own failings in this respect and does not correct himself, suffering, anxieties and doubts will continue and no religion can help.

He has to take care of his own nature, raise it to a higher level, so that it acts and reacts with cosmic nature in a harmonious way and in full accord. Raising of one's nature so as to cope with cosmic nature is the *raison d'être* of all religious philosophies, and the ways and means to achieve this objective are also identical, with some slight variations due to the local conditions and circumstances, existing at different times when these religious philosophies were born and preached at different places. In the environment come all the objects of the universe, animate and inanimate, as also the relation with one another,

with life in general, particularly with human life and human relationship.

Both the average man and the intellectual are not satisfied of soultion of the riddle that the universe is. It is nowhere in sight. Known universe is vast, infinite and unlimited, and Reality behind is unknown and unseen. This is the great difficulty, but efforts to make life easier, smoother and better will nevertheless continue.

2

Aryan Vedic Dharma or Hindu Religion

THE ARYAN VEDIC religion or Hinduism, as it is generally named, is claimed to be at least ten thousand years old after the Aryans came and settled in India. Whether it is a revealed religion by God, or it was the result of meditation and thinking of sages and saints of yore, who gave out their experiences, which are embodied in four Vedas, is besides the point. The Vedas have been given the highest status, and so are recognized and believed to be Divine revelations, as they contatin eternal truths, inspiring experiences based on sublime wisdom and knowledge of great practical utility, unknown till then and unsurpassed since.

The main reason, which stimulated the imagination of wise men of yore to think and observe, was the fear of suffering, disease, tribulation, want and compulsion, and there existed an earnest desire to find remedy for all these ills. In course of these meditations and analysis, they came to realize that there are two similar natures, one existing in cosmos and the other in conscious human being. Both the natures, consisting of common primary elements, in macro scale in cosmos and in micro scale in humans, are acting and reacting on one another to seek harmony and accord. The interaction and interplay takes place from conscious human being's side through the means of his senses, mind, thought and intellect. So it is the human being who has to work his faculties of perception, feeling, thought and intellect and will in such a way that his own nature goes in harmony and accord with the cosmic nature. The human being, being a conscious and thinking animal, it therefore becomes entirely his responsibility to find harmony with outer nature, which is already under the control of Supreme Consciousness and is governed by eternal cosmic infalliable laws. The realization of securing this harmony by human beings was the result of long and continuous meditation, contemplation and metaphysical analysis, otherwise prior to it the Aryans

believed that the primary elements of nature were responsible for the suffering and tribulations, and so deified them, offered sacrifices and rituals to propitiate them. The worship of these deities, in course of time, assumed huge and disproportionate size, entailing much labour, heavy cost, more show and ostentation, and thus degenerated into irrational ceremonies and superstition. Not only this, the ritualistic worship divided the society into high and low, rich and poor, sinful and virtuous, and as such caste system, originally intended as a measure of division of labour in society for the wholesome and healthy development and integrity of the people based on intelligence, bravery, business acumen and aptitude of the individual, became hereditary and original qualifications were thrown to winds. A Brāhmaṇa's son could still be a Brāhmaṇa, if he was a thief or robber; Kṣatriya's son would still be a Kṣatriya if he showed cowardice and forgot his duty of defending the folk, and so Vaiśya's son was doomed to be Vaiśya even if he had the quality of a Brāhmaṇa or Kṣatriya. The case of Śūdra was still worse; he could never hope and claim to go to higher classes, even if he had better qualities of intelligence and business acumen. He and his children continued to remain Śūdra to the

present day.

However, even with this sort of worship, the suffering and ills continued, and discrimination of class and caste divisions further worsened, and brought greater misery and suffering. The seers and thinkers among them, in due course, came to understand for the first time the relation of nature in cosmos and nature of man, and realized that the two natures, if made to act and react harmoniously, human being can avert and at least mitigate to a considerable extent the suffering and ills by means of developing his potentials and powers, so that he builds up an infrastructure, within himself, which will enable him, not only to face those ills and sufferings, but even to avert them, or lessen their effect. One of such powers is *titikṣā* (forbearance and fortitude). Man as a thinking animal has therefore to establish and secure this harmony, and it is his sole responsibility, but he should also have faith that responding to his efforts Reality will no doubt lend its support and help in creating a condition of harmony. Man has to do it deligently and methodically.

With this realization, the thinkers and seers gave out philosophy by further analysis, by giving birth to six schools of Hindu philosophy, one after the other. All these philosophies are individual

thinker's and seer's own interpretation of eternal and subtle truths and experiences as contained in the Vedas. The six schools of philosophy were intended as commentaries and interpretations of Vedas, according to their respective understanding, and also to make people understand and follow the same and remove misunderstanding, if any. The six schools of philosophy in consecutive order are: (1) Pūrvamīmāṃsā, (2) Nyāya, (3) Vaiśeṣika, (4) Sāṅkhya, (5) Yoga, and (6) Vedānta.

Pūrvamīmāṃsā is Karmakāṇḍa of ceremonies and rituals. Nyāya tries to explain Reality and world in terms of logic and induction. Vaiśeṣika propagates the theory of atom, and holds that the world and its objects are due to cohesion and adhesion of atoms. Sāṅkhya School classified *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* (God and Nature) as constituting Reality. The joint action of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* creates the universe, and when separated, it gets destroyed. In this, they categorized twenty-five elements in cosmos and man's nature which interact and interplay. The elements in cosmos are ten, i.e., Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether, and the sense objects are smell, taste, form, touch, and sound, which are characteristics of five elements respectively. Man's inner nature consists of five senses of intelligence, and five senses or

organs of action and then there are mind, intellect, ego and *ātmā* or consciousness, and above them the Supreme Consciousness or *Paramātmā*—making twenty-five in all. This philosophy explains and expounds the relationship of cosmic nature and man's nature, and how man is to practise, to live, and observe discipline so as to make the working of two natures harmonious. At least these practices will impart strength to man to resist and bear, to some extent, the strains and pressures of these ills and suffering. If the connection of the senses, mind, intellect and *ātmā* were straight and direct, and if in-between ego (*ahaṅkāra*) or sense of "I-ness" were not there, the result would have no doubt been, not only straight and simple, but quick and marked in raising one's nature to secure complete harmony. But this sense of "I-ness" and ego comes inbetween and pushes him back, as it gives rise to mean and narrow instincts, which inhibit man at every stage. This conception of mine-thine, of myself and yourself, is so strong and so elusive that a great endeavour, effort and long practice and perfect knowledge is required to withstand its onslaught. Many a great saints have foundered and fallen. The sense of "I-ness" and self is like a big mountain in the path of spiritual realization, and unless the conception

of self-creating differences of I and you, mine and thine is not removed or subdued, no progress in the path is possible.

For this purpose, the first and foremost attempt of aspirant, on the path, would be directed to either truly surrender self and ego at the altar of God or Reality, or otherwise to control, govern it and regulate it in such a way as will at least facilitate the journey on the path and not create impediments.

Along Sāṅkhya philosophy came Patañjali's Yoga philosophy, the fifth school of thought. It however lays down such methods and practices and discipline, which have to be followed by an aspirant, by means of which control over senses, mind, thoughts and feelings could be achieved. When the desire-driven enemies of man are eliminated or subdued, then the concord and harmony of two natures in cosmos and man can be achieved and sustained. So this Yoga is more of a science that lays rules of disciplines.

Last school of Hindu philosophy is Vedānta. It is the school which has shaken the grip of dogmas and rituals by explaining the nature of Reality, which It names as "Brahman." The knowledge of Brahman or *Paramātmā* and His relation with *jīva-ātmā* is explained in a rational, logical and convincing way, and it is acknowleged as being

the highest wisdom and knowledge. The Vedānta philosophy is the quintessence of Vedas, and of all the five schools of Hindu philosoph. However, it has relied more on two immediately preceding philosophies of Yoga and Sāṅkhya, and has further developed on this and has illustrated and elucidated the conception, and in this way has pinpointed the existence of Brahman, which is Reality and which is in every human being. Further, the relationship of this Brahman with the universe and its objects, animate and inanimate, has been explained and analysed. Brahman is an unmanifested and unseen Reality, but by His attributes and eternal laws in cosmos and in man it is to be recognized as being identical with one's own self. So this necessitates knowing and understanding of Brahman through the means of powers and forces existing in both natures. Even in the earlier stages of this philosophy of Vedānta, the conceptions of duality (me and God), qualified duality (me as God) and Advaita (I am God) were present, followed and adhered to by the people according to their choice and inclination, but it was only in the eighth century AD that Ādi Śaṅkarācārya gave firm foundation to the Advaita philosophy, not only stressing the monistic conception of one Reality, but identifying one's own self with this Reality or Brahman.

This concept did away with the pantheon of Gods, big and small, and placed Brahman as the only one Supreme Reality or Supreme Consciousness, and at the same time identifying the same with one's conscious self.

This is the highest philosophy, churned from six schools of thought through Vedānta, particularly by Ādi Śaṅkrācārya's commentary on the *Brahmansūtras* which brought out the subtleness and supremacy of this thought into limelight. According to Advaita Vedānta theory, the empirical man and world are both unreal even though both are existent. Reality means what is unchanging and constant, while the world and its objects change in relation to Reality, and therefore the world is a delusion. A pot of clay so long as it serves its purpose is real, but when it crumbles and dissolves, it becomes clay which alone remains, as it is Reality of which it is composed. Clay stays there in original from and is therefore real. Reality is reality at all times and in all circumstances. Realization of Reality in the world is therefore realization of unity in diversity, which is a matter of experience. This idea of Vedānta philosophy of the world as *māyā* or delusion by projecting it both as unreal and non-existent does not appeal to rational thinkers on the ground that the unreal world, being liable

to change, is all the same very much existent and can be seen, enjoyed and felt. This approach of Vedānta to Reality and the world is not acceptable to Kashmiri Śaivite saints and thinkers who much earlier than Śaṅkara's concept of Brahman as Reality and world as *māyā*, had laid the basis of Śaiva philosophy by postulating one Reality—man and the world of objects in which the world is not taken or believed as *māyā* or delusion, but is as real as it is existent, and so it is the expression of Reality in which the nature and characteristics of Reality are to be searched for and realized. The world is not to be discarded, but is to be used as a means to find out the nature of Reality. This philosophy of Śaivism developd from third century AD, and reached its zenith from seventh to ninth centuries and continued to be practised and followed till thirteenth century. Advaita Vedānta philosophy of Ādi Śaṅkrācārya came to be known and followed from eighth century onwards. Therefore Śaiva philosophy is an independent thought of Kashmiri saints and thinkers, and may be that it might have lent inspiration to Ādi Śaṅkrācārya in the eighth century to formulate his Advaita Vedānta philosophy.

The fusion of ancient religion and Buddhism ultimately worked out a synthesis of diverse ideas

and thoughts that prevailed then and it penetrated so deep in the minds and intellect of people that the synthesis flowered in the shape of Advaita Vedānta in India and non-dualistic Śaiva philosophy of Kashmir. The former was established after Ādi Śaṅkrācārya's preaching in the eighth century as well as the ninth century, but the latter came to be formed from the fourth century AD in Kashmir by sage Vasugupta, and then by Kallaṭa on the basis of *Śivasūtra* and *Spandakārikā*. This Śaiva Philosophy reached its zenith in the eighth and ninth centuries, when scholar-saints and *ṛṣis* of Kashmir like Abhinavagupta, Utpaladeva, Somānanda and others explained and commented on this.

Kashmiri sages and people never accepted Buddhism even though Kashmir became a part of India in the time of Buddhist monarchs like Aśoka and Kaniṣka. While in India, it had spread like wildfire from north to south and from east to west, and it crossed the Indian borders on all sides, and spread over Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Tibet, China, Afghanistan, Persia, Egypt, and to Ceylon. However, with the philosophy of Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaiva philosophy, it declined in India. Decline had started by fourth century AD, but Advaita Vedānta and Śaiva philosophies as explained and commented upon in the eighth century as well as the ninth century

AD took over its place in India entirely.

The chief reason for such great and instant fall, amongst other reasons, was that Buddhism had not admitted the principle of Godhead or *Īśvara.* This absence of Godhead or *Īśvara* from their philosophy created a vacuum.

This great void or vacuum could not be acceptable to Indian psyche as God or *Īśvara,* as a powerful designer and controller of the universe, was very much deeply rooted in their imagination and psychology as a result of Vedic philosophy. The masses who were generally illiterate could not reconcile to the absence of Godhead in any philosophy.

The synthesis worked out in non-dualistic Śaiva philosophy and Advaita Vedānta philosophy, however, stemmed the rot that had crept into the society since centuries, but Advaita Vedānta could not bridge the differences of castes and classes, which still persist with all evils and dangers, threatening men, society and stability of the country. Kashmir Śaivism had no such difficulties, as there were no different castes in Kashmir at that time.

3

Birth of Śaiva Philosophy and Advaita Vedānta

UPANIṢADS were written by sages and seers long after the Vedas, approximately between 1500 to 1000 BC, and these were intended to reform the distortions and inconsistencies that had developed with time, changing environment and conditions in actual working of Vedic theories and principles. In practice, the sublime truths of the Vedas were misinterpreted by people to suit their selfish motives, dogmas, absurd superstitions, ostentatious rituals, irrational ceremonies and sacrifices. This resulted in the establishment of different classes, castes and subcastes. Those who had power and money, came to regard others as inferior to them. These defects again attracted imagination of thinkers and seers,

who with a view to correcting the mess and to removing the anomalies in the society gave expression to their thoughts and experiences, which constitute the Upaniṣads. Since these came about much after the Vedas, they are labelled as "Vedānta" (end of Vedas) denoting the last word and interpretation of Vedas.

Vedas deal with Karmakāṇḍa (ceremonial and sacrificial side), unattached action (*niṣkāma karma*), *bhakti* (devotion), and *jñāna* (knowledge). The people at large had adopted Karmakāṇḍa as sacrificial aspect of Vedas, but in actual practice it degenerated into irrational rituals, not only irksome, but also time consuming, extravagant and wasteful, in disregard of its other aspects.

Upaniṣads were intended to correct the debased and superficial aspects and to bring home the other aspects of devotion, unattached work and knowledge which were important to understand the nature of the self and Godhead or *Paramātmā*. Thus was laid the foundation of *ātma-jñāna* (Realization of Self) as the final objective to be achieved. It is said that 108 Upaniṣads were there. With numerous upheavels, wars and vicissitudes over a very long period of time only 108 were left, and out of these ten important are: *Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya,* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka.* Many translations, commentaries and explanations by

many renowned scholars of India have been written on these ten Upaniṣads. In these Upaniṣads the previous five schools of thought (Upaniṣads being the sixth school) have been co-related and synthesized. More particularly the two immediately preceeding philosophies of Sāṅkhya and Yoga have been elaborately discussed, accepted generally and incorporated into Vedāntic Philosophy.

Thus was introduced three conceptions of Vedāntic thought: (1) Duality, (2) Qualified Duality, and (3) Non-duality or Advaita as it is generally called. Duality and Qualified Duality conceptions were generally adopted by the majority of people, as these were found easy and suitable to their own line of thinking and inclinations. Followers of these were generally called Vaiṣṇavas. The Advaita Vedānta conception was too hard a truth to be easily understood and adopted, as it identified one's own self with Reality. This was made possible, in a large measure, only after Ādi Śaṅkara came on the scene. The Duality concept of "I and God" and Qualified Duality concept of "I as God," got slowly substituted by the Advaita concept "I am God."

This monistic concept of God is the climax of human intellect, thought and imagination. This is a very convincing and rational outlook, as admitted by many past and present day thinkers, both

Indian and foreign. This philosophy of Advaita Vedānta in course of time again gathered moss which resulted in discriminations on caste, class, and sect basis. These reappeared and again created disharmony and distortions in society and in the normal life of people. Surprisingly in the nearly 2000 years before Śaṅkara's Advaita philosophy saints and sages twice tried to stem the reappearances of these abuses and anomalies: firstly by expounding Purāṇas and Āraṇyakas, then by the enactment of two great Epics of *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata.*

In this way the saints, sages, and thinkers tried to put the people on the right tract and demonstrate the *dharma* of Vedas by actual working and practice. Purāṇas and Epics are myths and stories about saints and gods, showing how life of *dharma* is to be lived. Theory and practice was therefore put together to guide and lead the people to follow and act according to the essence of religion, of the Vedas. Rāma's life as a householder, a son, a husband, a brother, a ruler, and a friend is supreme example of such demonstration. It has shown by precept how a *dhārmika* life is to be lived based on principles of love, duty, justice, compassion, kindness, equality, and humanity. While *Rāmāyaṇa* is the description of the life of Rāma, *Mahābhārata,* which came after it, revived

the same virtues of *dharma* by working up to them in actual life of Kṛṣṇa and His contemporaries. Besides it emphasized and underlined the need and importance of selfless work, absolute surrender, devotion and supremacy of knowledge. This was made possible by postulating and projecting both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa as incarnations, or manifestations of unmanifest Reality, thus giving them the status of God.

Bhagavadgītā is the central chapter of *Mahābhārata.* This is a discourse between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna when the latter saw relatives and gurus on the battlefield, refused to fight his cousins Kauravas and all other relatives, being inveighed by attachment. Lord Kṛṣṇa is Arjuna's charioteer at the moment. On the refusal of Arjuna to fight, Kṛṣṇa gives him the highest philosophy of life, explaining life as it is and also how to live it with purpose. This philosophy constitutes the highest wisdom and subtle truths, experiences, acknowledged and acclaimed all over the world and unsurpassed so far. In this discourse of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the principles and theories of six schools of thought are further synthesized and co-related in such a way that the greatest thinkers of the world get bewitched and stirred. *Gītā* is said to be the quintessence of Upaniṣads, but it is more than that; it is convincing, logical, continuous, and consistent interpretation of Vedas, and represents the

synthetic development of thought of different schools of Hindu philosophy. In the discussion the subjects of soul or *ātmā*, matter, detached action, devotion, knowledge, nature of cosmos and humans, interrelation and interaction of these two natures, and the way to raise the lower nature to higher nature, and how to sustain it at that level are convincingly and elaborately explained. Besides the need and importance to kill and destroy the potent enemies of man, viz., lust, desire, greed, attachment, arrogance, and ego, have been highlighted. That desire and greed are to be controlled and regulated, lust is to be sublimated, and ego to be surrendered, attachment to be replaced by detachment, and anger to be controlled, are the basic principles of human discipline and practice. In this process, how the behavioural contradictions due to *tamas* (ignorance), *rajas* (passion), and *sattva* (truth) are to be kept under control and how one can rise above them, and be *guṇātīta* (beyond the influence of *guṇas*) are explained.

The behaviour and attitude of man of steadfast *buddhi* or intellect is clearly laid down, along with the means, as to how to achieve and maintain balance and harmony in mind, thought, behaviour, feelings, and how to sharpen and refurbish the intellect. *Bhagavadgītā* analyzes the physical,

psychological and intellectual compul-sions of man, and explains how to face and meet these compulsions, and guides one to take to spiritual way of life, as against material. Having explained and illustrated all these metaphysical truths and doctrines, Lord Kṛṣṇa in the end leaves it to Arjuna to act according to his choice, signifying that of course theories are there, but the choice of their acceptance rests upon the people ultimately. One's *guṇas* only help him in his choice.

With the passage of time, in spite of the practical lessons and demonstrations, the society once again fell victim to those very abuses and anomalies, and suffered the same physical and mental afflictions and doubts. The people stuck once again to mistaken and perverted notions of religious doctrines and theories.

It was in 520 BC that Buddha was born and, while reaching the age of 25 years, he saw all the prevailing conditions, and was deeply affected by suffering, misery and other anomalies. His spirit revolted against the system. He gave up royal title, household, wife and son, and became a recluse, wandering from place to place, meditating deep for many years to find out the cause of suffering, and the remedy by which it could be removed. On getting the Enlightenment, he propagated Buddhism, which was the second revolt against

Vedic *dharma* after the Upaniṣads. The difference, however, was that the Upaniṣads contained and developed Vedic tenets, and attempted to remove the anomalies by clarifying the doubts. Buddhism, however, was a total revolution that culminated in delinking itself from Vedic *dharma*. A new religion (Buddhism) was thus born based on experiences of truths revealed and mysteries unravelled, which Buddha the Enlightened explained in discourses to his disciples.

Kashmir Śaivism is founded on the integrated philosophy of Vedic *dharma* as explained by six schools of Hindu philosophy and principles and practices of Buddhism. Śaiva saints and sages in Kashmir developed their philosophy from 300 BC to AD 900. Buddhism reached Kashmir after its annexation by Emperor Aśoka in 320 BC. So it is necessary to discuss Buddhism, how it spread in Kashmir and also how some of its principles, which were in conformity with the ideas of Śaiva thinkers, were adopted and integrated within their Śaiva philosophy, and in return lent to Buddhism some principles and practices which the latter adopted.

The people of Kashmir were originally worshippers of Śiva according to the Vedic rites and beliefs. Śiva was taken as one of the Trinity (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva). Śiva whose abode as per

legend is Kailāsa who is wedded to Pārvatī, daughter of Himālaya in whose lap Kashmir is situated, and therefore became the chosen deity out of the Trinity for the people of Kashmir. This legendary worship of Śiva as one of the Trinity continued till the Buddhist influence and ideas reached Kashmir by 300–200 BC. Buddhism did not acknowledge and admit the existence of any God or *Īśvara*. The idea of denying God did not appeal and satisfy the Śaiva thinkers, but they however accepted only one God, i.e., Śiva as Ultimate Reality instead of pantheon of Gods. Śiva was taken as one and not one in Trinity, having all the powers of creation, maintenance and destruction. Thus the monistic conception of Reality as Śiva was born and this became the cornerstone on which Śaiva philosophy of Kashmir was based and developed from fourth century AD to ninth century AD. While this revolutionary thought developed in Kashmir after exchange with Buddhist scholars and saints, India continued to be under the influence of Vedic thought and Vedānta philosophy, but people in India at large generally feeling dissatisfied with the superficial, artificial and ceremonial ritualistic and differential aspects, embraced Buddhism till eighth century AD when Ādi Śaṅkrācārya, born in eighth century, came on the scene and propagated the Advaita Vedānta principles. By his discourses,

commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras,* he in a short span of life laid the foundation of Advaita Vedānta on monistic conception of Reality. The obvious result in India was that Buddhism declined and the Vedic *dharma* again prevailed, while in Kashmir no such conversions were involved, only the concept of only one Reality was incorporated into the Kashmiri Śaiva philosophy and worship. Thus Kashmiri Śaiva philosophy adopted a definite form and theory. The concept of *ahaṁ Śivo'smi* was another important twist in Śaiva philosophy, which corresponds with *ahaṁ Brahmāsmi* of Advita Vedānta.

However, it may be mentioned here that Śiva, as one of the Trinity, is nowhere mentioned in the Vedas or even in the five schools of Hindu philosophy. This mention is, however, made in the Upaniṣads, and that also in later ones. In the Purāṇas and Epics, Śiva is mentioned often as one of the Trinity. the *Ṛgveda* and *Yajurveda* do not refer to Śiva as deity or one of the Trinity, but mention Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Indra, Mitra, etc. Till then, and even for some considerable time after, Brahmā was taken as creator, Viṣṇu as maintainer, and Rudra as destroyer. In the later days Rudra was replaced by Śiva, and so the Trinity came to be known as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. Obviously the reason appears to be that Śiva was a

Deity of Dravidians and Kols, who were pushed to north and to south of the Gangetic plains when Aryans reached India and occupied the plains. It is because of this reason that the early Vedas could not find the name of Śiva. But Śiva worship continued to be practised in the north and south of Gangetic plains, where Dravidian influence continued for sometime and later on, when conditions got settled down and exchange of people and thoughts between Aryans of Gangetic plains and those living in the north and south took place, Śiva was accepted and incorporated as one of the Trinity instead of Rudra, who is a symbolic form of Śiva.

It is therefore that Śaiva philosophy flowered in north and south, almost as identical ideology. Kashmir Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta of the south are based on the Āgamas, which are the experiences of truths and intuitional outpourings of local thinkers and seers. There may be some slight differences, or practical variations, but basically they are same. The basic text of Śaiva philosophy of the south is Tirumandarin by Tirimūla Nayanār, a scholar who is said to have migrated from Kashmir to south in sixth century AD. He preached twenty-eight Śaiva Āgamas, which he got from Kashmir and in Sanskrit. According to these Āgamas, Śaivism is an ethical religion giving the

philosophy of Śiva, who is Supreme Reality. Fivefold functions of Śiva as Creator, Maintainer, and Destroyer, as well as Concealer and Revealer are discussed in these Āgamas. They also deal with yogic practices, which can lead one to Śiva. The Āgamas prescribe *mantra* and *ajapa* (silent *japa*). Four *sādhanās* or practices, leading to union, are also dealt with, viz., Caryā, Kriyā, Yoga, and Jñāna, corresponding to Karmayoga, Baktiyoga, Rājayoga, and Jñānayoga of Vedāntists. Nature of Śiva and ways to obtain His grace are detailed in the Āgamas. Seven plexus or power centres or *cakras* in the human body have been located and these have to be activated by inhaling and exhaling breaths, viz., *prāṇa* and *apāna*. Various yoga *mudrās* (signs) and the way of exoteric worship of Śiva are given in detail; and finally, the realization of oneness with Śiva in *samādhi* are also explained, in which *jīva* identifies himself with Śiva. Individual consciousness becomes Supreme Consciousness, and this is the state where mysteries are unravelled, truths are experienced and intuition awakened, and in this state Bliss or *ānanda* is enjoyed and a state of ecstasy is achieved. Such realized souls are real mystics.

The Śaiva basis union of man with Śiva on knowledge and faith, whereas Vedānta basis it on *karma*, knowledge and love. The main difference

between Kashmir Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta of south is marginal. Both recognize monistic concept of Reality, but under the influence of Rāmānuja (a great saint of south) the individual aspirant maintains distance from Reality by postulating "He as I," whereas Kashmir Śaivism boldly asserts "He am I." Śaiva Siddhānta of south is therefore not completely monistic. It is qualified monism, while Kashmir Śaivism is purely monistic.

Kashmir Śaivism acknowledges three entities, viz., one Reality, man and the world or superconsciousness, individual consciousness, and the universe with all its forces, elements, and so call this philosophy as "Trika philosophy," i.e., Trinity in one. Tamils call Reality as *pitī,* man as *paśu* and the world as *pāśa.* The main conceptions of both philosophies are similar, but some slight differences may be there due to local conditions and environment. Both recognize the world of elements, forces and compulsions, or outside nature and inner nature of man, acting and interacting to secure harmony; both deny Vedāntic conception of *neti neti* (not this, not this) and both highlight the need for discrimination and analysis (*viveka* and *vicāra*), and ultimately both stress the need of recognition of Reality as final objective, and point out the way to realize it.

All the same one fundamental difference that strikes is that Kashmir Śaivism believes that forces, powers, and elements in cosmos and in humans is but Divine Energy, which is the attribute of Śaiva, thus conforming to the Sāṅkhya principle of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti. Puruṣa* is held by the Sāṅkhyas as a dispassionate onlooker or spectator, while *prakṛti* or nature outside and inside man is at work, corresponding to the concept of Śiva, operating through Divine Energy or Śakti as It is generally called. This great importance and significance of the operation of nature as Divine Energy is exclusively a Kashmiri Śaiva thought, and is a mental, metaphysical and intellectual exercise and discipline. How this philosophy of Divine Energy or Śakti got entwined with Śiva, will be discussed in a later chapter.

Kashmiri Śaiva philosophers thought and contemplated in the bracing and charming climate of Kashmir and analyzed and meditated upon natures in cosmos and human beings, their interrelation and interaction, because nature is at its best in Kashmir and particularly in those old days when neither population was so much and hubhub and noise of present day was not there. In that calm, cool and serene climate this Śaiva philosophy was born which acclaims sublime truths about Reality and Nature.

This philosophy is explained in four chapters: (1) Trinity in one, (2) Pratyabhijñā doctrine or the Doctrine of Recognition, (3) Identification of Man with Śiva, and (4) Spanda doctrine.

These four principles of this theory are its four pillars on which Śaiva philosophy is based, and are discussed separately in following chapters.

4

Trika Philosophy of Kashmir

ŚAIVA PHILOSOPHY is called Trika philosophy. *Trika* means "three in one." This, therefore, is a system in which three different states, conditions powers, potentialities and characteristics in cosmic nature and human nature have been expressed in triads. This is a philosophical complex, as a result of philosophical observation and contemplation on the nature outside and inside man. Vedas have postulated three Deities: Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer respectively. In Śaiva philosophy, Śiva being the choosen Deity of the people of Kashmir, was taken as one Reality, who could discharge all the three functions of three Deities. In this way the triad became one. It is not only in

relation to this one Reality called Śiva that Trika name was given to this philosophy, but also various elements and entities in cosmos were expressed as triads. The table (*infra*, pp. 46–47) will show as to how these three quantities of the same element came to be expressed and classified. This was done so as to express purely monistic and non-dualistic philosophy.

There are good number of such sort of triads, which have been analyzed and recorded in Śaiva-śāstras.

All the triads of elements which were observed by seers as functioning in nature have been recorded and noted.

The following three recognitions have been made by the seers.

1. To recognize common universal soul or indwelling spirit in all human beings.
2. To recognize that actions are to be done in a spirit of dedication with the triad of body, mind, and intellect, which means hand, heart, head,—a triad in itself.
3. To recognize elements in cosmos, which are common and same for all human beings and are available to all in equal measure.

Elements of Entity	*Triads*		
	1	*2*	*3*
Reality	Śiva	Śakti	Nara
Reality	Unknown	Means to know	Knower
Reality	Object or goal	Means to achieve the object	Subject
Reality	Pramātā	Pramāṇa	Prameya
Reality	*para* (without difference)	*para apara* (without difference and with difference)	*apara* (with difference)
Tripura Sundarī (the beautiful queen of three world . . .)	Sky	Earth	Space
Divine Energy	Supreme Energy	Universal Energy	Individual Energy
Śakti	*cit* (Consciousness)	*buddhi* (intellect)	*prāṇa* (Vital life-force
Śakti	*icchā* (Desire)	*jñāna* (Knowledge)	*kriyā* (Action)
Conciousness	Supreme Consciousness	Universal Consciousness	Individual Consciousness
Condition of Consciousness	Waking	Dreaming	Deep Sleep
Dirts of Consciousness	*āṇava mala* (Ego)	*māyīya mala* (Delusion)	*karma* (Ignorance)

Vedānta	Advaita	Qualified Advaita	Dvaita
Yoga	*jñāna* (Knowledge)	*bhakti* (Devotion)	*kriyā* (Action)
Breath	Inhaling (*prāṇa*)	Exhaling (*apāna*)	Retaining (*samāna*)
Breathing (*nāḍīs*)	Iḍā (Inhaling)	Piṅgalā (Exhaling)	Suṣumnā (Retaining)
Sound	Vaikharī (Full throated)	Madhyama (Intermediate voice)	*paśyanti* (Feeble voice)
Light and Energy	Sun	Moon	Fire
Guṇas or Attributes	*sattva* (Harmony)	*rajas* (Passion)	*tamas* (Inertia)
Fire	Sacrifice	Household	Cremation Ground
Body Activity	Physical	Mental	Intellectual
Spirit	Soul-Oriented	Both Soul and Body Oriented	Body-Oriented

These triads are in cosmos on macro scale, while in humans they are in a micro scale.

All such triads signify that the numerical three has some importance and even sanctimoniousness attached to it, and so is regarded auspicious. In chaps. 17 and 18 of *Bhagavadgītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa has emphatically said that charity given, sacrifice made, penance offered, food eaten, yoga performed, renunciation made—all have three qualities or states, though bearing one name.

The sanctity of the numerical three is firmly established by three letters of the word *AUM*, which, whenever uttered, involves three movements of mouth. The word *AUM* is the Primordial Sound with which creation started. It indicates the subtle energy of Sound element in the universe.

The way in which it is uttered involves three distinct movements of mouth. With letter *A* mouth opens, with letter *U* it is sustained as open, and with letter *M* it gets closed. In this way all the three functions of creation, maintenance and destruction are indicated. Therefore, the sacred word is the supreme formula to indicate Reality. This word becomes the target for concentration and *japa*, and it is to be repeatedly uttered. *AUM* with inhaling and exhaling breaths, spoken silently, becomes audible to yogis as *nāda* in the heart region, and when uttered with concen-

tration on the luminous *bindu* (on point), non-dimensional point, representing concentrated energy, either in head or in heart, becomes the main practice of Śaiva followers and aspirants on the path. Thus the word *AUM* is the secret and sacred formula, which signifies Śiva for Śaivas, and Brahman for Vedāntins. *Japa* of *AUM* keeps worldly thoughts away from consciousness.

5

Pratyabhijñā or the Doctrine of Recognition

THE THEORETICAL CONCEPT of Kashmir Śaivism is centered around the monistic principle of one Reality, which is the primordial cause of creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. To recognize this and realize this one Reality, one has to assume that Śiva is a changeless principle by Himself, but contemplating all changes through *cit* or consciousness, endowed with life principle in all living creatures of the world. Consciousness is there in the waking state, and partly in the dreaming state, while in deep sleep, it remains, so to say, in suspended animation.

The connection between life and consciousness is therefore very intimate. Consciousness is the sum total of physical, mental, psychological, intellectual processes working in living beings,

and is therefore the cause and effect of all mobility and activity, and thoughts and feeling, and that is life. Consciousness in all animate beings, other than human beings, is limited to body alone and caters to physical needs and urges for survival, while human beings' consciousness is not so limited as to remain restricted to instinctual urges and physical needs only. The scope of human consciousness extends to distant horizons in which, besides these, are urges, pressures and compulsions of mind, heart and intellect, which a human being has to deal with. The instinctive urges and compulsions for survival, viz., hunger, thirst, shelter and sex, are common to both human beings and other animate creatures. Animals and other creatures deal with them in their own way—wildly, savagely and impulsively, without any consideration for ways and means. Human beings' consciousness is guided by his intellect, in catering to, and satisfying, hordes of desires, ambitions, aspirations, feelings, and other problems that arise as far as his mind and senses go.

Man knows that he has an intellect, and is conscious of his having consciousness, and both these powers take him to distant horizons in this vast universe and its varied objects. So his consciousness plays a significant role, not only in imagining and desiring, but also in analyzing the

phenomena. Examination of self is one of the important functions man engages in.

Ultimate Reality behind the universe manifests itself as consciousness, which includes two inherent powers, and these are Self-revelation (*vimarśa*) and Light (*prakāśa*), to guide and direct man in exploring and tackling the world of phenomena. Both these powers *ipso facto* give an immediate awareness of "I" (as self) and *idam* (as universe). It is "I" awareness which manifests *idam* as its first cognized object, and maintains and reabsorbs it in the end. Awareness acquired by practice, *sādhanā,* and yoga transforms human consciousness into Divine Consciousness by which empirical self or *jīva* gets awareness of Reality or Śiva. In this way individual consciousness becomes Universal Consciousness.

It is by *sādhanā* that one can understand one's nature, its good and bad traits, and then by observing prescribed disciplines and following codes of conduct, behaviour and thinking, one can be able to mould, unfold and direct his consciousness, to behave like Śiva, or Universal Consciousness. Life principle is one and same for all animate living beings, and is universal. It is then that the significance of this can be recognized and understood by human beings.

With the acceptance of oneness and similarity of life, the mind of a human being also undergoes change. Mind is the creation of senses and their guide and controller as well. Normally it is not strong enough to control and restrain senses by itself, but it draws its strength from the intellect of man, in which the concept of oneness and universality of life principle gets rooted. Such an intellect, then, lends it support to mind, and makes it Supermind in respect to Super-consciousness. Having got strength and potency, it then can effectively control and direct senses and even restrain them when the need arises.

Human mind and thought structure, under the influence of Universal Consciousness, begins to realize the Divine Consciousness that has qualities of truth and purity, is free from the dirt of ego, delusion and ignorance; and the "I-ness," which man's Consciousness has generated, is therefore a spark of Divine Consciousness, and this reflects on mind and makes it Supermind. Both consciousness and mind, then, become and remain soul-oriented and body's grip on both gets relaxed and loosened till finally soul's orientation prevails in both consciousness and mind of human beings. The tragedy with human beings is that when the soul and body or spirit and matter come together to create life, the human consciousness gets veiled by dirty shrouds of ego, ignorance, and

delusion, which Śaiva philosophers have named as *āṇava mala, māyīya mala,* and *kārma mala.* These dirts do not allow absolute truths, purity and pristine glory of the spark of Divine Consciousness to reach and reflect directly on the intellect, and thereby on human mind. So human mind and man's senses are attracted and get lured by the sense objects.

It is to remove these veils of defilement of ego, delusion and ignorance that *vimarśa* (Self-reflection) and *prakāśa* (Light), inherent in Universal Consciousness, are to be harnessed and utilized. The main practice for realizing Śivahood centres on these two elements. Supreme Bliss (*ānanda*) is the experienced then. Both *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* must work together.

Normally three powers or potentials, called *śaktis,* get generated under the influence of light and meditation, and these are *icchā śakti, jñāna śakti, kriyā śakti* (will, knowledge, and action). These are *suo motto* born and act spontaneously. So long as mind is not Supermind, strong enough to control the senses, these three *śaktis* under the power of delusion (*māyā śakti*), by which unreal is taken as real and real as unreal, the individual consciousness loses its potentiality and this correspondingly, then, undermines the state of Śivahood. The influence of *māyā śakti,* along with five limitations of time, space, knowledge, attach-

ment and skill, which are the means by which *māyā śakti* operates, is reflected in individual consciousness, as mind and intellect get affected by *māyā śakti.*

So long as "I-consciousness" relates itself to the body, the world and its objects will draw and lure the mind towards themselves, and the man in that case will be roaming in wilderness and dark. It is only when the soul consciousness comes and prevails within him that man can approach the realm of spirit or soul, and *vimarśa* and *prakāśa.* As a result he can rise to the state of Śiva or Universal Consciousness. These two powers of self-revelation and light are available to all, and with these the power of will, knowledge and action are made to work in such as way as would render the journey to reach Supermind or Divine consciousness easy.

Man's conscience is the abode of consciousness; and from which man gets guidance, warning and experience.

Sāṅkhya philosophy has pointed out twenty-five elements in both cosmic nature and human nature, which act, interact and react. Śaiva philosophers have indentified thirty-six elements, i.e., eleven more than Sāṅkhya, and are named as Śiva consciousness, Śakti consciousness, *sadākhya, Īśvara,* and *śuddha vidyā.* The remaining six elements are *māyā śakti* and its five accompanying

limitations called *kañcukas*, thus making thirty-six in all. These thirty-six elements peravde the universe and life principle to function.

The three defilements and impediments of *māyā* can be removed by performing practices, following disciplines and norms of behaviour and conduct, but only after when one secures initiation from an accomplished guru or master. The concept of "I-consciousness" as "Soul-consciousness" is to be firmly held, as this is the *raison d'être* of this philosophy. Soul's freedom, purity, potentiality, and pristine glory, are to be so used that ignorance, ego, and delusion *suo motto* leave the mind and intellect of the aspirant; concept of self as body is eliminated completely, and mind and even vital life-force (*prāṇa*, energy) are subordinated and made to accept the superiority of the soul and purity. Only then in this state of "I-consciousness" individual consciousness becomes Universal Consciousness and is free from all limitations and dirts. Such consciousness is self illuminating and will always be at the back and call of the aspirant.

Natural forces and elements in the cosmos are alike and similar to the forces and elements in human beings. It is for the human being to activate these forces, and use them in a balanced and judicious way, so that harmony with cosmic forces is realized and achieved. This can be achieved by

means of *vimarśa* and *prakāśa*, no doubt, but even then awareness and alertness are very much needed for expanding, unfolding and raising one's consciousness. Human potentialities, called *śaktis*, are to be put to work wisely, guided by *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, then only veils of dirts of ego, ignorance, delusion and limitations of *māyā* can be removed and torn asunder. These *śaktis*, when invoked properly, give greater awareness and alertness at all times. Then the concept of "I-consciousness" as only soul-consciousness is not disturbed by the world and its objects. It is only soul-consciousness, that must pervade the intellect and imagination, mind and senses. But this is not so easy as may be asserted.

Will of human being is called *para śakti,* or superior force of the mind. It is will that directs and controls all *śaktis* and potentials within man. The connection of will and *śaktis* is that of sun and sun's rays, of fire and heat. By means of will power yogis, saints and mystics can perform miracles, can create anything, by moving hand, or by casting a look, or by nod or breath. Eight proficiencies of Siddha are acquired by these mystics like becoming small or great or invisible, or something to be seen at many places at one point of time, and so on. Such mystics render humanitarian work by mitigating sufferings and sorrows of people.

For any individual, who undertakes this journey,

it is essential that he moulds and changes his nature from bad to good, from good to better and to the best. His understanding should be free from cobwebs of confusion, and then his physical, mental and intellectual faculties have to be always in sound and healthy condition. He has correctly to analyze his self and recognize what he is, good or bad, and then only can he hope to rise. He must be able to subdue or reject primitive urges and compulsions, and only then can he hope to improve his nature (*svabhāva*).

Man is again a victim of such dualities as likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions, love and hate, and so on, which pull him in opposite directions on physical, mental and intellectual planes. These dualities generate hordes of contradictions, distortions and disputes within man himself, which if not handled properly can lead to despair, frustration, doubt and failure. Overcoming of dualities is therefore an important step in the practice.

Every normal human being would like to have harmony or peace within himself, and with environment and social structure outside. The dualities of human nature have to be overcome so that harmony can be there, otherwise distortions, disputes and conflicts will be recurring, which will not enable one to live in peace and harmony.

Self-examination is not needed only for ful-

filment of spiritual aspiration, but is more needed to enable one to live a life without sin and vice, and also perform his duty properly and rightly. Self-analysis as such is necessary for an average man, otherwise wild nature in man is likely to assert itself, and man is likely to get confused and lost. For an aspirant of realization, of the state of Śivahood, this self-analysis and self-examination is frequently needed, so that a proper track on progress made in the journey can be maintained and corrections made. Even advanced saints have sometimes fallen and have been pushed back. It is for this reason that the importance of total alertness and awareness is stressed, lest one is swept off his feet at any unguarded moment. A strict adherence to ethical and moral living is a necessary condition, which has to be acquired and scrupulously maintained.

The disproportion or imbalance in natural *guṇas* of *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas* in every human being is to be removed and these are to be harmonized and neutralized, so that they do not create distortions and imbalance in one's nature. One has to rise above these attributes to find peace. For the removal of dirts and limitations of *māyā,* Śaiva philosophy lays three means called *upāyas.* They are: *āṇavopāya, śāmbhavopāya,* and *śāktyopāya.* In *āṇavopāya,* the limited individual starts yogic practice by harnessing his intellect, his breath and his sound with concentration on some

object in space. In the *śāmbhavopāya* alertness and awareness must be sufficiently strong, steady and firm, and so concentration on some object is not therefore needed. Withdrawal of thought should be there, so that man's consciousness plays a free but passive role. In *śāktyopāya mantra-śakti* called *mātṛkā pūjā*, along with "I-consciousness" of soul are used, as these make one to forget the self and the universe, and total absorption and concentration remain in line with meaning and significance of *mantras*. *Āṇavopāya* and *śāmbhavopāya* are mental and esoteric methods, while *śāktyopāya* is esoteric and exoteric. In Kashmir *śāktyopāya* was resorted to and followed generally, and this crystallized in *śakti-mārga*, i.e., seeking to realize Śiva by worshipping His *Śaktis*. Kashmir is therefore called *Śakti-sthala*, i.e., Abode of Śakti.

Pratyabhijñā philosophy shows the way of raising *jīva* and transforming him into Śiva by raising one's consciousness to the state of Super Consciousness. Man has forgotten his real nature, which by this philosophy he is enabled to revive and raise it to get identified with Śiva.

6

Identification of the Individual Self with Śiva

INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS of a human being is limited, and can go up to the extent his normal senses can reach. Beyond that consciousness gets limited because of limitations or impediments put in its functioning by the limitations of time, space and casuality. These limitations are impediments to the free working of consciousness and are due to the accumulation of three obstacles created by ego, attachment, and ignorance as also the delusion caused by *māyā* with its five elements called *kañcukas* by which man is so deceived as to mistake the real for the unreal, and vice versa.

Originally man's consciousness is just a spark from the Universal Consciousness, planted when

spirit or soul carrying the spark comes in contact with matter or body, and this contact becomes the cause of life principle. It is, however, a tragedy with human consciousness that when this life principle gets created, consciousness by contact with body or matter gets limited on its own, and cannot function freely, with pristine glory and purity of soul. Due to the actions of human beings in past lives and in this life, this spark of spirit or soul gets veiled and prevents consciousness and senses to operate beyond a certain extent. These veils are there because when "I-consciousness" dawns and is understood, then this "I" unfortunately gets inclined towards the body. This inclination of consciousness towards the body is proportionate to the extent man's intellect is affected by the three dirts and *māyā* mentioned in the foregoing paragraph.

This shows that consciousness in itself is pure and clear, but veils or shrouds get created round it, which obstruct its function in a free, pure and clear way, which are its original characteristics. By limitation, consciousness loses freedom and clearness and even truthfulness, and it comes under the influence of delusion. It is, therefore, the main responsibility of man to tear asunder veils, shrouds that come between consciousness and intellect and make it to function freely with purity and truth, which actually it has.

Naturally from this follows that it is ultimately man who can draw from this freedom, purity and truth by his efforts, and make his consciousness more soul-oriented and ignore bodily compulsions and pressures. In this way man's consciousness is elastic. It can expand, or get squeezed, depending on individual efforts.

Man has to secure initiation and timely guidance from some accomplished guru and follow the discipline of body, mind, and intellect and way of living, conforming to some norms of codes of conduct, so that his consciousness and intellect cooperate with his efforts to clear the cobwebs of limitations of accumulated dirts. This is the *sādhanā* for the aspirant. The ultimate successful result would be that empirical consciousness will be bright, pure and true like the Universal Consciousness from which man's consciousness has come. The purity and truthfulness will of its own make man's mind pure. In this way empirical *jīva* becomes identified with Śiva and on this identification is based the equation that *jīva* is Śiva in the ultimate analysis. It is then that the *sādhaka* safely can proclaim with authority, "I am Śiva" (*aham Śivo'smi*).

This experience is of Vedānta also when in the ultimate stage claim is made to proclaim: "I am Brahman (*aham Brahmāsmi*). Both claims are correct and point out to the same experience of

realization of Reality. The paths may be somewhat different, but final goal is the same, and both have to go through almost similar bio-psychointellectual exercises and disciplines, and both have to build up an infrastructure within themselves, which would make it possible for them to come out of the delusion created by *māyā*. Vedāntist will go on the path by the process of rejection, *neti neti*, while the Śaiva will understand, verify and then absorb the experiences, if found correct; otherwise he will throw them away. The difference of approach is due to the fact that the Vedāntist takes the universe and all its objects as unreal, being perishable, while the Śaiva does not take the universe as unreal, because in his view the universe is the expression of Śiva, and so is identified with Śiva for the time it exists, even though it is perishable. In his view it is just like the relationship of the object and its image reflected in a mirror. So long as it is there, it is an expression of Reality, but when the mirror is removed, the image is nowhere. However, the ultimate goal of both is to reach and realize Reality behind the whole empirical phenomena.

In fact the Doctrine of Identification of *jīva* with Śiva is a corrollary to the Doctrine of Recognition or Pratyabhijñā. It works both as cause and effect for self analysis. Śiva is both immanent and omnipresent. His effulgence radiates in the

universe and on all objects of the universe. Human being is the highest in the universe and so Śiva's effulgence radiates in him in its full luminosity and purity. This effulgence gets veiled and shrouded by attachment with body, and by delusion caused thereby, and so man has to uncover that effulgences by removing veils and shrouds. Pratyabhijñā philosophy or the doctrine of recognition prescribes the means and ways to achieve this goal, and when it is achieved, then only can man's consciousness operate and function as Śiva or the Universal Consciousness. The clarion call of "I am Śiva" is not to be construed as a bold and haughty assertion. It is when body consciousness gets ignored, and Soul consciousness rules Supreme, that this assertion of *Śivo'smi* can be justified and rightly made. Body has to be ignored, but it does not mean that it is to be neglected to the extent that it gets damaged, diseased and disabled. Its attractions and temptations have to be resisted, but it is to be kept in fit and healthy condition, so that it becomes a suitable house for the pure and truthful soul to radiate Śiva's effulgence in its pristine glory and brightness.

In this state man works, his senses work, his mind works, but the attractions of the body do not disturb the equanimity of mind or the functioning of the senses. The worldly temptations and compulsions,

the bodily attractions and urges, no more stimulate the senses. The senses, however, are alert and aware in the state of Śiva consciousness. It is a state of *jīvan-mukti.* Such a realized man's intellect has become steadfast and he shines as a lotus flower in full bloom, but not is wetted by the water or mud in which it stands. Such a man, while living in the universe, is not fettered or chained by its entanglements caused by delusion, attachment, false notions, false ego and selfishness. Super Consciousness makes the mind Supermind and then both acquire super vitality. In this state spirit only dominates and rules. Then truth and freedom from delusion and ignorance is secured, and this ultimately, with devotion, surrender and love can bring identification and ultimate union with Śiva.

No doubt, this philosophy does suggest that the human intellect is the supreme means to work out the union of *jīva* and Śiva, but that only would not be sufficient until heart joins hands with the intellect, and coordinates its activity to suit the intellect's demands. Feelings, sentiments are of the heart, and it is heart which looks upon the universe, its objects and its people, human beings and animals, having life principle. So human relationship and environmental congeniality is more a hearts function than of the intellect. Logic and rationality sometimes may fail to reach the innermost intricacies of a problem, but heart with

its attributes of love and sympathy is likely to succeed in arriving at a solution quickly and surely. Heart chooses ideas, systems, which one strives to absorb and adopt, or even at time reject, so it can be of help to the intellect in many cases, but at rare times it may create impediments. Heart is full of love, and so love is very much the cause and outcome of any union, and much more so of union with Reality. Intellect may not give that joy, peace and happiness if worked out by it alone. After all feelings, sentiments and emotions have their role to play, as these are also powerful forces in human psychology recognized and accepted by the intellect. For ultimate identity and unity with Śiva, His grace is still needed beyond intellectual and mental purification, and that grace can be very much assured if there is total surrender and devotion to the ideal, which only love can make available.

Conquest of *māyā* and disciplining of *vikalpas* by forgetting body consciousness are necessary requisites for the aspirant to start on the path, but even then man will need initiation, and continuous guidance from a realized master in his journey on this path. Contemplation of form should be in the end the contemplation of formless, of nothingness or void, as Śiva can be found to be in that void, which one has to reach.

The final experience of identity with Śiva can be

achieved when one's consciousness passes from waking state to the fourth state, i.e., of *samādhi* or *turīya*. In this state all sensations and feelings, thought structures, ideas, revolve round one and one principle, i.e., Śiva the sole Reality, and one can get inspiration and even intuition of oneness with Śiva in this state. In the state of dream and deep sleep this experience cannot be there, though Śaiva philosophy asserts that when even *turīya* or *samādhi* state is passed over, then Śiva consciousness will permeate and prevail in all the states.

On achieving Śiva consciousness, universe is seen as consisting of Śaktis or powers of Śiva, which are also the powers of the self. By intense awareness and alertness, any difference between Śiva, Self and universe disappears. Complete identical consciousness of self and Śiva is then experienced and that becomes guiding light shining as Śiva's *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*.

The universe consists of thirty-six *tattvas* or elements from Earth to Śiva. On union, all the *tattvas* disappear and dissolve leaving Parama Śiva and man to be united.

7

The Doctrine of Spanda

SPANDA literally means "a sort of movement, a throb." In Śaiva philosophy, it signifies a sort of vibration or throb of consciousness, which imparts an ecstatic experience of Divine. The first movement of consciousness gives the experience of "I-consciousness," when the "I" refers to the soul only and not to the body. It becomes a spiritual movement, and is called the dynamic creative pulsation of Śiva. Śiva is free to act, as He wills. By means of *vimarśa* (self-revelation) this soul oriented movement of consciousness is Spanda, and in this only consciousness moves, but the body, mind, and even *prāṇa* (vital breath) do not move.

Spanda is Śiva's dynamic aspect. Since *jīva* and Śiva are one, so Spanda is the movement in

individual consciousness of man, and is identified with the essential Self.

This principle of Spanda can be realized by introspection or inward meditation involving the process of emergence (*unmeṣa*) and withdrawal (*nimeṣa*), viz., appearance and disappearance. This emergence and withdrawal are automatic and spontaneous movements of individual consciousness, similar to the spontaneous opening and closing of eyelids, experienced in the waking stage of human beings, and not in the dreaming state and sleeping state.

The Universe is the expression of Śiva, and Spanda postulates it. Just as banyan tree exists in its seed, so does the universe exist in Spanda or vibration in individual consciousness. Spanda is therefore Śiva. Spanda activates the mind, senses, and intellect to reach the objects of senses, and this is dynamism of Śiva. However, when individual's consciousness gets veiled by three dirts of *āṇava mala, māyīya mala,* and *kārma mala* or by *māyā śakti,* and its five accompanying impediments (*kañcukas*), Spanda cannot be realized, as spiritual experiences of "I-consciousness" are not then possible. Spanda is implicit in consciousness when it is true and pure and spiritually engaged.

Complete awareness, constant alertness, and steadfastness of *buddhi* or intellect are needed to

catch the experience of Spanda principle, which cannot be experienced in emotional or unsteady state of mind. When Spanda is realized, then inhaling and exhaling breaths merge in *suṣumṇā nāḍī*, and go up to *brahmarandhra* in brain and get dissolved there.

Spanda, when identified with the universe, becomes extrovert meditation and worship by concentrating on any object of the universe. The meditation is accompanied by reciting and uttering of appropiate *mantras* and formulae which dissolve in the universe, which is the expression of Śiva, and its objects radiate the effulgence of Śiva.

The process of *unmeṣa* and *nimeṣa* (emergence and withdrawal) are actually the vibrations of awareness in which consciousness of man remains conscious of Śiva on account of emergence and withdrawal of Śiva. Awareness gets extended by reciting *mantras* and thereby duration of awareness remains sustained and gets prolonged. This is called *mātṛkā pūjā* or the worship of powers of Śiva in the form of His Śaktis or Divine Energy in cosmos and in man. In this way *jīva* and Śiva secure union.

This doctrine of Spanda is a thought which only seers and thinkers of Kashmir have contributed by giving birth to *krama* system of worship in

which Śiva and Śakti are always together, and cannot be differentiated or considered apart or separate from each other. This system laid the foundation of Śakti-mārga for attaining Śivahood. *Jiva* becomes Śiva by holding fast the apron strings of Śakti, and gets uplifted and sublimated to realize essential Self or Śiva.

Cit śakti or power of meditation (self-revelation) generates three *śaktis* of *icchā* (will), *jñāna* (knowledge), and *kriyā* (action) in man. These are born of their own spontaneously. Other *śaktis* as that of *vāk* (power of speech), *prāṇa* (vital life-force), *smaraṇa* (memory) and other powers or *śaktis* which activate the mind, senses, intellect, ego, physical body, and agents of action. Of all powers, the most important one is that of intellect, or *buddhi,* by which one understands, judges, chooses, discriminates and selects, and then takes action. In this way all physical, mental and intellectual activities of man come under examination and get prompted to action. All these *śaktis* in man are stored in a concentrated form, of a sleeping serpent of three-and-half coils, a little below the base of spinal cord. It is called *kuṇḍalinī śakti. Kuṇḍalinī śakti* in human beings is the consolidated and concentrated power, and is just like the Divine Energy in cosmos. Both *śakti* of man and of cosmos are analogous and similar, and both are unleashed by the Divine Energy.

The Divine Energy as one unit was observed by the thinkers and seers of Kashmir, as is recorded by them in the last verse of *Pañcastavī*. The Divine Energy is one unit just as the elements of Sun and Moon are, but Its faces are numerous and functions numberless. It is like a dancing girl having so many faces. It deludes *jīva* and ultimately rescues him from delusion. It is not only as power which moves the body, mind, and intellect of man, but is personified as goddess of learning, prosperity, wealth, adversity, riches, poverty and ultimately controls Death and its functioning.

Spandaśāstra holds that Reality or Śiva can be known by one who views that universe is a playground of Śakti as Divine Energy in cosmos, and as *śakti* in living beings, as an inherent and implicit element with life principle just as consciousness is. Both soul or consciousness and Energy are therefore necessary attributes which constitute life in whatever from we see. This *śakti* is present and visible in all living objects of the universe, and recent research has proved that even trees, plants and vegetation in the universe have power or *śakti*, which enables them to grow, to bear fruit and wither and die with time.

Spanda doctrine is the fourth pillar of monistic and non-dual Śaivism of Kashmir. *Śivasūtras* on

which Kashmir Śaiva Philosophy is based were revealed to Vasugupta, a saint and a mystic. The same saint has written fifty *ślokas* on Spanda, which were commented upon by his disciple Kallaṭa. In this way it has become an essential practical aspect of the Śaiva Philosophy.

8

Śakti-mārga

MAN FORGETS three realities of life and the world: (1) That all animate and inanimate objects of the world are perishable, (2) that man is born naked, and has to go naked, and (3) that death is certain and inevitable. Had the forgetfulness of these three realities not been there, both life and the world would have been different and man's role in the world would also have been different. Because of this forgetfulness, man's attachment for the world and worldly objects never slackens, and his efforts in this direction never stop. It is everywhere the same with man, and he cannot extricate himself from the rut he has fallen in, and be above and aloof. Divine Energy or Śakti as first Spanda or vibration of Śiva mantifests Śiva's power. It is the first amongst thirty-six elements,

which have emanated from Śiva and which constitute the world from earth to Śiva. Śakti assumes so many forms while operating in the cosmos and in human nature. One of the forms is *māyā śakti,* which is actually the power of delusion, by which man takes real for unreal, and vice versa.

The same Divine Energy in cosmic nature and in human nature assumes so many forms like *cit śakti,* i.e., power of revelation through introspection and meditation, *icchā śakti* (will), *jñāna śakti* (knowledge), *kriyā śakti* (action). It is when *cit śakti* starts functioning by means of self-revelation called *vimarśa* and asserts itself, then the remaining three *śaktis* follow automatically. These three *śaktis* are followed by the powers of intellect, mind, senses, memory, body activity, and similar other powers which make man to think, feel and act as he does. It is by invoking all these powers within man that he can fight *māyā śakti* or power of delusion, and ultimately can be free from its influence. Thus the *śaktis* in man can enable him to come out of the rut into which he has fallen by delusion and be a better man. This is not so easy as said, but with the help of his intellect or *buddhi śakti,* the most dominating power, he can come out successfully if only he complies by its guidance and is not led astray by emotions and feelings of the senses. Then only man can understand the purpose of life and derive some sense of satisfaction.

Śiva is static, a dispassionate onlooker. After implanting a spark of its consciousness in individual consciousness, Śiva leaves the functioning of cosmos and human nature to the Divine Energy. Thus, this Divine Energy is Śiva's dynamic aspect. Man endowed with intellect or *buddhi śakti*, a superior force or power of thinking, discriminating, understanding, choosing is expected to enliven the individual consciousness, so that the grip of limitations of *māyā śakti* and other dirts of ego, ignorance and delusion are got not only relaxed, but loosened to the extent that the level of individual consciousness gets raised to that of Universal Consciousness. As a result the effectiveness of consciousness and its proper and wise application can enable man to rise above negative pressures and forces. In fighting negative forces, pressures and compulsions generated by man's mind, senses, feelings and thoughts structures, man's intellect is the main weapon available to man, and after putting this to work, it is possible that wisdom and skill can be acquired. As Śiva and Divine Energy are inseparable and inalienable, so is human being inseparable from the Śaktis or powers within him.

Divine Energy is the sum total of powers of elements and forces operating in the cosmos, while *śaktis* of human being operating within him

also are due to the same forces and elements, but on a very small scale. Soul and Energy are immortal, and both in union create life. Both are Śiva's attributes and signify His static and dynamic aspects respectively. Because of closeness of both soul and Divine Energy, and being inseparable, these have been projected in male and female forms as husband and his consort, just to impress the human intelligence with the inseparability and closeness of these two, as the universe and world therein is created, maintained and gets destroyed as a result of this union. So Divine Energy has come to be taken or projeced as the Consort of Śiva.

The importance and superiority of creative intellect for unfolding the *śaktis* within human beings, so as to bring orderliness and effectiveness in consciousness of man is understandable, as only then can one fight the hordes of compulsions, pressures, urges which the powers of mind and senses unleash when the world and its objects attract both these towards themselves. Man has to acquire and maintain steadfast *buddhi* by which the pressures of dualities within human nature like hatred—love, pain—pleasure, bad—good, sin—virtue, get neutralized and do not disturb the mental stability of man, after which attachment, fear, anger, greed, lust get eliminated on their own. Besides these, man has to harmonize the

temperamental *guṇas* of *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas,* and be above their influence, particualrly of *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). The effective role of man's intellect can only be there when man's consciousness shakes the grip of dualities, of attributes and other negative pressures. Intellect should be sharp and bright, but there should be wisdom to use it in the best possible way and take proper advantage of it. It would only then be possible for the individual consciousness to overcome the limitations of time, space and casuality. Then only can individual consciousness be universal consciousness.

Time is infinite running from eternity to eternity, and so cannot be stopped. Space and Matter are also unlimited, as they are not measured, and so these two are more or less infinite. Space and Matter can be probed, and are probed, but time is one such element which cannot be probed. It is for this reason that time is identified with Śiva Himself, and is designated as Kāla, viz., destroying function of Śiva called Death. To categorize time as past, present and future is due to human imagination to suit human convenience, and to make understandable the functioning of life and the world. Past is gone and is beyond one's control, future lies in hope and every moment that passes is consigned from the present to past, and future

takes place as present. No body can stop or interfere in the functioning of time as it is. One can interfere with it only the moment it presents itself to him. To avail the present moment and to make the best use of it, one has to be not only fully aware, but also highly alert. Then only can the present be used to some advantage. Consciousness of man must be awake, alert, and the intellect must be sharp, and then only time of the present moment can give some result. Past is beyond one's control, and it is futile to dwell on it. Future leads to the building of castles in the air, which is also futile.

Śaktivāda is the path of attaining Universal Consciousness by invoking inherent powers in human beings, harnessing them and then using them to raise the level of consciousness to that of Universal Consciousness, free from limitations of any kind, so that consciousness so acquired enables one to see beyond time and space and to understand the cause of all happenings and events which the senses or mind cannot testify. This twist to basic esoteric feature of Śaiva philosophy to highlight the role of Śakti was the result of Krama system, introduced into this philosophy by Kashmiri thinkers some two hundred years after Śaiva philosophy's birth. This Krama system was already implicit in Spanda doctrine, but could not be underlined for 200 years. *Spandasūtras* are attri-

buted to Vasugupta, the founder of Kashmir Śaiva philosophy. Only when Kallaṭa commented upon them that their significance could be grasped. This system came to be adopted by the close of the seventh century and gave birth to Śaktivāda. It is therefore that Śaktivāda is both esoteric and exoteric. It is esoteric, as mind, intellect and senses are involved and concentration is on the formless or void, but it became exoteric when concentration was directed on some objects by which this practice became both objective and formless, in which vital life-force (*prāṇa*) and sound are so used as to create a subtle sound in the heart region called Nāda. The melody of this subtle sound is felt in the *mantras* that are recited.

To facilitate practice for the followers, Śakti came to be recognized in female form as the Consort of Śiva, because Śakti and Śiva are inseparable. This Śakti-worship assumed a personalized characteristic inasmuch as every family in Kashmir aligned itself to one or other popular forms of Śakti. This alignment became hereditary and rigid to remain unchanged from generation to generation. For this reason, this system is called Kulācāra, meaing family system. The five forms of Śakti recognized in Kashmir are: Śārikā, Rājñī, Jvālā, Tripurā, and Jyeṣṭhā.

Since Divine Energy or Śakti has acquired the status of Divine Mother, so its impact is so great that even the followers of other faiths bow in respect when they happen to pass by a temple or place where Śakti is worshipped. The word "mother" naturally draws human imagination and mind of every man, of any faith, in respect and awe, as Mother symbolises the Creative and Protective aspects of Reality.

Invoking and worshipping Śakti by awakening the *kuṇḍalinī śakti* at the base of the spinal cord, where she is lying as a sleeping serpent in three-and-half coils, and then raising it by the force of *prāṇa* (vital life-force) to brain centre in the head through five intervening centres of power, and then bringing it back to its original place below the spanial cord within man is the prescribed practice. Concentration and reciting of *mantras* simultaneously goes on. The practice is rather difficult, as it requires proper initiation and constant guidance in early stages from some Yogī or realized master. By this practice mind is silenced, its activity and fickleness gets controlled, concentration deepens, brain gets enlivened and vitalized, and all the organs, nervous system and centres of power get strengthened. Brain becomes effective in bringing orderliness in consciousness and then removes all the cobwebs

that veil consciousness. Inhaling and exhaling of breath in a specific way and retaining it, is a hygenic exercise which is conducive to good health and proper strength. This yoga is a bio-psychological-intellectual exercise in which two elements of nature, *prāṇa* (vital life-force) and *śabda* (sound), are so used as to create a subtle sound called Nāda, which is audible to a Yogī or aspirant in the heart region. This subtle sound is concentrated on a luminous point (non-dimensional point) and the duration of concentration increases or decreases as moon gains or sheds one digit of light daily in the bright or dark fortnight respectively. This whole practice is called *nāda-bindu-kalā*, which is the main exercise or practice of the followers and aspirants.

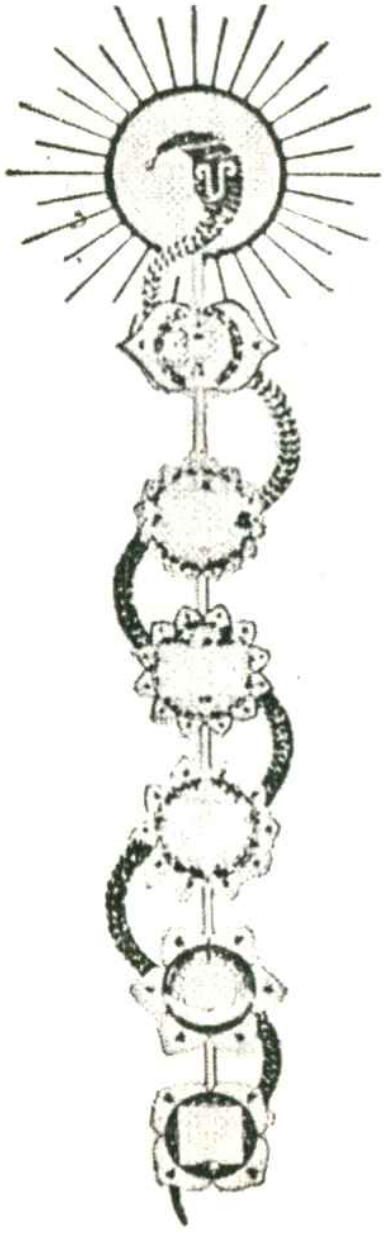
Nāda-bindu-kalā is derived from *kuṇḍalinī yoga* practice, and is the mystical and secret practice, for explaining profound and sublime truth of oneness and unity of cosmic nature and human nature. It is an esoteric feature of the practice, but with the exoteric worship of Śakti with the recital of appropiate *mantras,* it becomes both esoteric and exoteric.

Śiva and Śakti working conjointly unravel the drama of the universe and life in general, and in particular human life. A human being is called upon to play his role of improving his own nature,

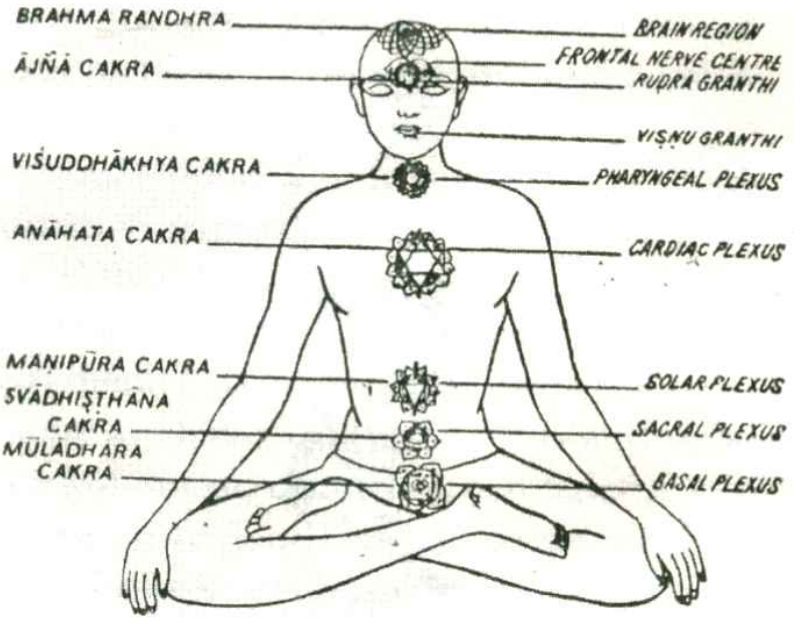
so as to create harmony within himself and in the environment. Cosmic nature has inherent balancing power, but man has to cultivate and develop this power of balancing by adjusting and readjusting with changing environment. Then only harmony can be there, and smooth course of life can be possible, and some sense of satisfaction and fulfilment can be achieved.

Successful culmination of yoga gives a strange but humanising awakening to man in which he realizes (1) that all human beings are equal having similar soul and as such there is no difference amongst them, (2) that the basic elements in the cosmos are available to all in uniform and equal measure without any distinction of religion, caste, creed, class, and colour. Śiva's grace is available to all provided one knows how to invoke and secure it. (3) That when human body becomes the cremation ground of lust, greed, ego, arrogance, and attachment, which are five enemies of man, then only Śiva's *prakāśa* or light can be available, which, while working hand in hand with *vimarśa* or power of self-revelation, can protect and save one from sins, omissions, commissions, vices, and mistakes, both deliberate and non-deliberate. Then only can one understand the purpose of life which is to enjoy everlasting Bliss.

Divine Energy operates as will of Śiva, and is



Ill. 1. Kuṇḍalinī


BRAHMA RANDHRA
BRAIN REGION
ĀJÑĀ CAKRA
FRONTAL NERVE CENTRE
RUDRA GRANTHI
VIṢṆU GRANTHI
VIŚUDDHĀKHYA CAKRA
PHARYNGEAL PLEXUS
ANĀHATA CAKRA
CARDIAC PLEXUS
MAṆIPŪRA CAKRA
SOLAR PLEXUS
SVĀDHIṢṬHĀNA CAKRA
SACRAL PLEXUS
MŪLĀDHARA CAKRA
BASAL PLEXUS

Ill. 2. Cakras

called *ṛta,* i.e., orderly functioning of the cosmos. Human being has to strengthen his will power, so that he can go on living in harmony and peace within himself, and also with environment outside him. It is in the state of inward peace that he can face and bear compulsions, stresses and tensions, with patience and tolerance, and can even avoid them by cultivating wisdom and intelligence.

To translate idealism to realism, is as difficult as to imagine abstract as concrete. Both these require skill, ingenuity, imagination and efficiency, which only hard and continued practice can give, with perfect control of mind and senses, and a sharp razor-like analytical intellect. Then only is there any possibility of catching a glimpse of the abstract in forms of concrete realism.

The position of seven centres of energy within human body and the functioning of *kuṇḍalinī śaktis* passing through these centres can be understood by looking at the illustrations (1 and 2 *supra,* pp. 85–86).

9

Islam and Sufism

ISLAM REACHED Kashmir in the twelfth century AD. Subaktagin and Mahmūd of Ghazani, Muslim invedars from Central Asia, many times attempted to reach Kashmir in the eleventh century AD, but the high mountains surrounding the Valley and severe cold of the winter foiled their attempts. All the same some Muslim infiltrators and adventurers in small numbers did, however, manage to reach Kashmir. Chingiz Khan and his son Kublai Khan conquered Tibet in AD 1203. After Kublai Khan's death by the end of twelfth century, the hold of Mongols on Tibet and Baltistan weakened. Small chieftains and Rajas asserted their independence. One such independent Chieftain was Raja of Ladakh in the beginning of thirteenth century.

Rinchen was the son of this Raja, but after his father's death, his enemies rose against him, and he was forced to run away. He came to take refuge in Kashmir. He reached Lar Pargana in Kashmir Valley. In the way was the fort and house of Ram Chand, Chief Minister of Raja Sahadeva of Kashmir Valley. Here Rinchen meets Shah Mir, a Muslim refugee from Iran. He had infiltrated into Kashmir along with Mongol infiltrators and remained at Ram Chand's house at Lar. Ram Chand appointed both Rinchen and Shah Mir in his service. Raja of Kashmir Sahadeva was confined in the royal fort of Inderkot (now Sumbal) by Mongol infiltrators. After Mongol adventurists departed, Ram Chand declared himself as Raja of Kashmir in AD 1320. Hindus had by this time got demoralised, not only by frequent invasions of adventurists like Mongols, Huns, Kushans, etc., but also due to their internecine quarrels and fights among feudal clansmen. Śaiva philosophy received a setback by these events. But greater damage to this philosophy was caused by Leftwing Tantra which had grown by this time and which had weakened the moral and spiritual fibre of the people in general. Rinchen and Shah Mir in these conditions enlisted themselves in the service of Ram Chand. Their advent on the scene marks a new and quite different role with a significant effect on the future history of Kashmir.

Rinchen and Shah Mir plotted against Ram Chand, murdered him and Rinchen became Raja with Shah Mir as Prime Minister. Kota Rani, daughter of Ram Chand, the last Hindu ruler, was married to Rinchen. Rinchen professed no religion as such, but since he was from Baltistan, which had come under the influence of Buddhism, he may have been a Buddhist. On becoming Raja, he wanted to be admitted to Hinduism, but local Brāhmaṇas opposed him in this. Then he consulted Shah Mir, who manipulated things in such a way that Rinchen accepted Islam at the hands of Bulbul Shah, also a Muslim *faqīr* who had also reached Srinagar by then. Rinchen was killed in AD 1323, and was succeeded by Kota Rani, as regent of two minor princess from her earlier marriage. Later on Shah Mir forcibly married Kota Rani, but on the very first night Kota Rani stabbed herself with a dagger, just on entering the bed chamber. Shah Mir assumed power, as regent for two minor princes in place of Kota Rani deceased.

Though the monistic concept of Islam agreed with the monistic concept of Śaiva philosophy, but the agreement was on the idea, but not with regard to ways of life, customs, traditions. Shah Mir appointed Sahadeva as Chief Minister after having converted him to Islam, and through this converted Chief Minister, Sahadeva, he started for-

cible conversion of Hindus to Islam. Hindus suffered, some got converted, some fled, some committed suicide, and some were killed. But most of them were converted by force and intimidation, reconciling themselves under the urge of the desire for survival. ShahMir after some time threw the clock of regency for two minor princesses and proclaimed himself as the first Muslim King of Kashmir under the name of Shams-ud-din in AD 1339, but died only three years later.

After Shah Mir (Shams-ud-din) there were recurrent wars and fights amongst the various claimants, and so killing of one another was frequent, intrigues were common, feudal lords were backing one claimant against another, and all this did not allow conditions to settle down. In the rule of Sulan Qutb-ud-din (AD 1374–89), a Sufi Shah Ali Hamdani, generally known as Hamdhan, came from Persia with six hundred followers. He was well versed in Muslim religion and theology. He was a Sufi and had written some books in which he set down general principles to be followed by Muslim sovereigns in public and private life. He was neither a bigot nor a political revolutionary. He was more of a reformist and a religious preacher, and some times he behaved like a mystic Sufi, as he had been influenced by Sufi thought.

He did not believe much in militancy and materialistic outlook and action. In Srinagar, he resided at a plot of land below Fatah Kadal where Kālī (Hindu goddess) shrine was situated. Since the occupation of the place by him it is named as Khanqah Mu'alla. Till then there was conversion of Hindus to Islam by force and compulsion. Now that Shahi-Hamdhan began to preach Islam, conversions were made by persuasion. The task of changing Kashmiri culture, customs, mode of living, dress and habits from Hindu to Muslim was undertaken by him. Mosques were built. Neo-converts to Islam were made to change and to conform to Muslim customs and ways of living.

It was then that Lalleśvarī, a local Hindu woman saint and an ascetic, came on the scene and was recognized as a mystic Śaiva saint, both by Hindus and neo-Muslims. Simultaneously Sheikh Noor-ud-din of Chahari-Sharif preached a similar philosophy as that of Lallā, viz., oneness of Reality and identity of one's self with that Reality. Both spread their philosophy through *vāks*, pithy sayings and poems in Kashmiri language which had developed by then, and when spoken in their local language, this philosophy had tremendous effect on both Hindus and Muslims, as these sayings were easily understandable in sweet tones, soul-stirring and thought-provoking melodious songs.

The non-dualistic concept of identity with God

was already there in Islam and Śaivism. The new Sufi concept of *Anal-haq* (I am Truth) had by now reached Kashmir. This concept corresponded with the Śaiva concept of "I am Śiva" with which Hindus and neo-converts were already aware, as it was in their blood and imagination. In spite of revival of Sufi cult analogous to Śaiva philosophy, forcible conversions by tyrant and fanatic Sultans continued so much so that temples were destroyed and mosques erected instead. Ruthless massacres of Hindus and desecration of Hindu temples of worship by Sultan Sikandar Khan were so frequent that he was nicknamed as Sikandar the idol-breaker. In Kashmir Valley only eleven Hindu families are said to have survived, rest were converted, killed or had fled.

Meanwhile Shah Ali Hamdani passed away. His son Syed Mohammad Hamdani stepped in after his father, and came to Kashmir with his followers. Sultan Sikandar gave a grand reception to him, and built the *khanqah* on the site given to his father. He, unlike his father, relied on the use of force for the propagation of Islam instead of persuasion. He employed militant methods with close co-operation of Sultan Sikandar who was under his influence considerably. Shah Syed Mohammad Hamdani even went to the extent of opposing the Sufi thought.

From AD 1420 to 1470 Kashmir was ruled by

Zain-ul-Abidin, famous as Budshah, and it was in his time that Hindus got relief from the oppression. Their lives and places of worship received protection and even those who had fled were invited to return and were resettled. It was in his rule of fifty years that fusion and synthesis of Śaiva philosophy and Sufi ideology took a firm base. The Sultan's court was thronged by saints, scholars, and poets of both communities. After saints Lallā and Sheikh Noor-ud-din, saints as Sheikh Baha-ud-din, Ganj Bakhsh, Madeen Sahib, Mulla Ahmad, and Śrīvara were patronized and encouraged.

Budshah's free, liberal and tolerant policy brought about a cultural fusion and environmental harmony to some extent. Śaiva philosophy got revived again. After Budshah, there were many sultans, some tolerant, some not so, and as such there were interruptions in the development of this synthesis, but all the same Sultan Budshah's rule had its effect on the sultans that came after him, and so they could not afford to be very exacting and cruel. All the same synthesis remained there. At this time Muslim Shia sect had established itself in Kashmir and there were recurring feuds between Sunnīs and Shī'ās, wars of succession on the death of Sultans also kept them engaged otherwise. After the fall of Yusuf Shah Chak, the last local Sultan of Kashmir Valley

passed under the control of Mughal kings of Delhi in 1587 in the time of Emperor Akbar. The first three Mughal kings, viz., Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan were more or less benevolent and tolerant, particularly Akbar in whose time the fusion of Śaiva and Sufi thought further gained some foothold. Mughals ruled through Governors sent from Delhi. Some of these Governors were not so liberal, but strict watch and frequent visits by the kings, Akbar and Jahangir and by their representatives, stopped them from committing excesses. After Aurangzeb's time, the intolerant policy again appeared and with this the decay of Mughal rule in India began. By that time, as a result of the invasions of Afghan, kings Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdālī, Mughals lost Kashmir, and the Valley got linked to Kabul. Pathan rule in Kashmir is marked with court intrigues and killings. Afghanistan deputed Governors generally from Kabul, though sometimes local Governors were appointed. Some of these Governors were hard and intolerant to Hindus, who by this time were Kashmiri Pandits only. After Mughal rule in Kashmir, the Śaiva and Sufi ideologies remained in a subdued tone till 1819, when Kashmir fell before the Sikh Army and after some time in 1846 came under Dogras. It is during the Sikh and Dogra rule that some famous

saints and mystics both Hindus and Muslims again came into prominene. As a result of this fusion of ideologies, a certain class of Muslims known as *ṛṣis* came up, who abstained from eating meat on some days of the month in sympathy and out of regard for Hindus and Hindu saints, and follow this practice even now.

During the Dogra rule secular outlook developed and many Śaiva scholars, saints and mystics such as Ramji, Mehtab Kak, Paramānanda, Swami Anandji, Kashkak, and Swami Gopi Nathji are worthy of mention. The present living Śaiva scholar and saint is Swami Lakṣmaṇajī, whose *āśrama* is at Ishbar near Nishat garden. He is a scholar of high quality and at the same time is a saint. Born of a well-to-do family, he lives a life of an ascetic and is *bāla brahmacārī*. He is engrossed in study, preaching and practising Śaivism. Even foreigners come for consultation and seek his advice on difficult methods of *kuṇḍalinī* yoga and metaphysical problems. Besides him, there are other Hindu and Muslim saints who have given expression to the subtle and thought-provoking ideology of Śaiva and Sufi philosophies.

Apart from this revival of the basic philosophy common to Śaiva and Sufis, the fusion of two cultures of two communities has come about which has helped to promote and foster the

cultural, economic, social, and educational interests common to both the communities. This synthesis has resulted in building up a culture and character based on toleration, secularism and humanitarianism which have come handy to the people of Kashmir at many difficult times so far.

Śaiva saints and Sufi mystics have attracted followers from both the communities. Muslims owe sincere allegiance to Hindu saints and Hindus to Muslim saints. Both communities regard and respect such saints equally, come to them to secure their grace and derive benefits from their experiences of truth and mysteries. This has further strengthened the harmonious relations of both the communities who rub their shoulders with one another in the congregation of these Hindu saints and Muslim *ṛṣis*. Both communities gave these saints their own names and identified themselves with them. So much harmony developed that the members of one community looked with respect and reverence on the places of worship of the other. When a member of the either communities passes by a mosque or a temple, his attention is instantly drawn inwards in introspection, though just for a moment. This is the result of spontaneous awareness and a movement of consciousness whose seeds were laid much earlier by the

Doctrine of Spanda.

This broad liberal and cooperative outlook is not the result of any compulsion or force. It is a voluntary expression promoted by man's nature developed by common and identical philosophies and rational understanding of Reality. This is Trika philosophy of Kashmir which has penetrated into the blood of Hindus and converts to Islam.

Abul Fazal, Akbar's scholar minister, on this synthesis of Śaiva and Sufi philosophies got inscribed a Persian verse which is as follows:

> God! wherever I go I find those who seek Thee only, and who everywhere praise Thee. Both Hindus and Muslims walk in Thy path uttering God is one and without a second.

The synthesis of the ideology of toleration, patience, amity, compassion, sympathy, friendliness rusulted in reviving almost similar traits of character, behaviour, attitudes and outlook, which already were there, but were obscured by the fear of conversion and intimidation. A secular and humanitarian outlook, based on equality and dignity of man, developed in proportion to human developement. Whatever may be said about the rigidity with which both Śaiva and Sufis

adhered to their respective religious tenets, the tenacity, the skill and the reasoning that exhibited to propagate their wisdom, attitude and outlook, emphasizing secularism, toleration, humanitarianism and equality of all men not only by word of mouth, but by setting precepts and examples in their day to day working, had marvellous effects on the people at large. It was the outcome of true and sincere outburst and expression of the working of their mind, thought and feelings on similar lines, based on common belief in oneness of Reality. Therefore a truly secular outlook, based on conviction, could be observed when members of both the communities joined hand in hand to remove a tyrant and cruel ruler or Governor or Minister, and also to throw out foreign rulers and their representatives. The part played by the people of Kashmir Valley to free themselves from Dogra rule, and to align with India under the able leadership of Sheikh Abdullah is recent history and known to most of the present generation. But most important and significant is the joint and combined resistance of both the communities, Muslims and Hindus of Kashmir, to tribal hordes from Pakistani in 1947, 1965, and 1971. More particularly the events of 1947 (pre-and-post partition days) when communal riots,

massacres, killings, arson and lootings were perpetrated on a frightening scale in the subcontinent. It was Kashmir only that remained calm on communal front, and both the communities joined to give a lie to the two nation theory by offering resistance to the tribal invaders. Before 1947 raids, Mahatma Gandhi's sharp intellect had seen the common behavioural trends and outlook of Kashmiris (Muslims as well as Hindus), and in that communal frenzy, which was raging all around the subcontinent, he had foreseen a ray of hope of secularism in Kashmir which proved correct.

These traits of character and outlook, being the spontaneous outcome of a spiritual convictions, are therefore more lasting, more effective and more dependable than one based on compulsion and force or laws and statutes.

This synthesis of cultures, behaviour and outlook has intellectually, culturally, and economically helped the people a lot. This has given birth to the Kashmiri language common to both the communities in the first instance. It is no dobt a sopken language only, being a mixture of Sanskrit and Persian, Dardi, and Kohistani. It is now written in both Devanāgarī and Persian alphabets. The development of common spoken language further integrated the people and

brought them closer. Kashmiri Muslim scholars, saints and intellectuals are even now studying Upaniṣads, *Gītā* besides their own scriptures. Similarly Hindus are also studying their scriptures besides *Dīwān-i-Hāfiz*, *Dīwān-i-Sa'dī*, and *Masnawi-yāt-i-Rūmī*, which are attracting their attention as they discuss Sufi philosophy.

With the birth of Kashmiri language, Kashmiri music and songs came into being. Kashmiri *vanvun* (translation of Vedic *Mantras* on marriages), *sūfiāna kalām* (expressing Sufi thoughts, songs, *ghazals*) and *rāgas* (collective dance and singing), and *cakkri* became very common and attracted all the people equally. Kashmiri poetry made considerable headway and dealt with subtle intellectual, philosophical, religious, metaphysical, and emotional subjects.

The practices of Śaiva and Sufi thinkers, starting with introspection and ending in contemplative meditation, speculation and analysis which need deep and complete absorption and attention, gave them masterly skill in professions and works of fine arts as embroidery, paper machine, wood carving, shawl and pashmina spinning and weaving, carpet and woollen manufactures and silver work. The same absorption and attention attracted them to nature's beauties as indicated by flowers, trees, rivulets, streams, mountains,

forests and the varied beautiful panorama, which was abundant in Kashmir to be seen, experienced and enjoyed. This cultivated an aesthetic sense for beauty. The colours of nature found expression in paintings in houses, mosques and temples.

Finally, an art of living developed which was consistently adhered to. That life is for living was understood by them, and though poor, they lived more or less a contended life with whatever little they had in a purposeful way, consistent with social and ethical norms and in harmony with nature. Their's was a life of high thinking and plain living even in these tough times when competition and materialism had not cast their baneful influences on the country and on the people.

This synthesis ideas of and ways of living and mental development, was brought about by common culture, fostered by Śaiva philosophy which till thirteenth century was prevalent, accepted and followed by all, and after thirteenth century by the development of analogous Muslim Sufi culture whose teachings and preachings were similar to Śaiva philosophy. This had given birth to a specific Kashmiri culture whose seeds had got deeply rooted, and is therefore the rich cultural heritage of all Kashmir. These common

traits of culture do after all get revived more often in the reconciliation of differences whenever they happen to rise, mostly under non-Kashmiri instigation and influence. Differences were generally fanned by outside agencies. Left to themselves, the Kashmiris would make the reconciliation of differences easily possible as a result of the qualities of patience, tolerance, and understanding, which they have got from this common culture. The core spirit of respective religions lay on spiritual aspects to which both Śaiva and Sufi philosophers alike subscribed.

10

Christianity with Reference to Śaivism

THE PROCESS OF development of thoughts and philosophies of Hinduism and Islam and Buddhism have been narrated, and how all these three religions meet in the core idea of one Reality, world and man, corresponding to the basic principles of Kashmir Śaiva philosophy, which also have been explained. This philosophy, in the final analysis, came to recognize *ahaṁ Śivo'smi* corresponding to *ahaṁ Brahmāsmi* and *Anal-Haq* of Muslim Sufis. All these three religions echo the same ultimate goal for man. The remaining fourth big religion Christianity remains. Now attempt is made to see if Christianity can offer an analogous concept and if there is any meeting place with the Śaiva philosophy.

Christ started with the acceptance of God as one and the only Reality, and as the creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the world and its objects. He initially said, "God in Heaven," and in second phase he proclaimed: "God my Father in Heaven." The third phase was characterized by the assertion: "I am the Son of God in Heaven," and in the fourth stage he gave out: "The Kingdom of God is within you." The development of this thought and expression of this conception by stages may have been necessitated to prepare the ground for his listeners for accepting his final concept of "The Kingdom of God is within you."

This concept that "God is within you" is very much similar to the concepts of all the three religions—Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslims. In the final analysis "I am He" or "Thou art That" is the common and final objective for all the four religions. The ultimate ideal being the same, the efforts and ways for realization of this object may differ here and there, but codes of conduct, moral and ethical practices, principles and metaphysical analysis are also almost the same. These practices and disciplines are meant to subdue one's lower nature by raising it to higher nature, and then to harmonize one's own nature with the cosmic nature and environment. On the establishment of this harmony, Reality can be reached and realized.

Christ further elucidated it by examples and references. He had to perform miracles like reviving of the dead, making the lame walk on mountains, making dumb speak, restoring health to the sick and granting sight to the blind, so as to convince his followers and secure their faith.

Inspite of the identity of basic philosophy and final goal, the differences that may appear can only be attributed to differences in dogmas, rituals and ceremonies, superstitions and traditions, but none with regard to the philosophical and rational concept of Reality-Man-World.

India's contact with the West was very limited and rare in those old days when Śaiva philosophy was in vogue, which meant that reformatory changes in religions and the development of thoughts and philosophies of India could not reach those countries quickly and easily till the seventeenth century. Similarly India also could not know much till late seventeenth century about the development of philosophies and thoughts of Western scholars and thinkers. Even the news of crusades and religious wars fought in the name of religion between different religions, i.e., Christianity and Islam were not much known or understood. However, it is in the seventeenth century that thinkers and philosophers like Bacon, Spinoza, Schopenhaur, Kant, Hegel, and others gave

expressions to their thoughts and philosophies on God, Man, and the World in a rationalistic way, which is similar to Śaiva philosophy and Sufi principles. Spinoza's thoughts are very much similar when he calls Reality by the name of Substance, and under the attributes of Reality, he includes fundamental elements in nature and eternal laws of nature. The perishable objects of the world he calls as modes. According to him, Substance is unknown and unseen like Reality, but can be recognized by man only through the means of forces and powers in nature and by eternal laws that govern these elements and forces. By means of contemplation and analysis, one can harmonize his inner nature with the cosmic nature outside, and then only vices of greed, lust, malice, falsehood and jealousy can be brought under control. It is only then that realization of Reality can become possible. This corresponds exactly with the Śaiva conception and philosophy. Schopenhaur has tried to impress that force of desire, thought and will is very great and quick, and unless one has a matching power of discrimination and choosing, he is liable to be swept off his feet, and get out of control. So he has emphasized the great need of increasing intellectual power, so that right discrimination and right choice between right and wrong, virtue and sin can be made. Intellect must

be sharp and quick also, otherwise the force of desire will outstrip it and man may suffer in consequence.

The technological and scientific inventions and discoveries in the West in the sixteenth century and onwards brought about industrialization and revolutionised the generally accepted thoughts and concepts of people. This industrial revolution in Europe presented greater material lurements of gains and comforts of life and living, but gave a setback to metaphysical analysis and meditation. As a result, seeds of crisis of faith in God were sown, and with the corresponding increase in material gains, the crisis deepened further with time. Man's potentialities did not correspondingly grow and develop so as to face the increasing ambition and desire of the people. This resulted in the lack of faith in God. All the same the concept of God or Reality, nature, and man cannot be waived off or dismissed. Even Napoleon has said that if it be admitted that there is no God, then man has to create one to uphold social order and to maintain ethical and psychological harmony in the society, apart from satisfying man's own inquisitive nature about the mysteries and unknown secrets of the world, about births and deaths, about physical and eternal laws which govern the functioning of the world.

Believers of religion invoke God, and even non-believers wittingly or unwittingly do so when confornted with difficult and unpleasant situations. Even agnostics and atheists indirectly admit belief in the existence of God when they say that there is no God. God is there, and is a mystery, and the difference is that believers want to approach Him and realize Him, while non-believers would wish Him out and refuse to approach Him. Scientific knowledge has made sceptics of people. Lust, desire for money and material objects have changed the mental outlook and thinking about God and nature. This is so not withstanding the fact that the great scientists like Darwin, Newton and Einstein, with all their great and famous contribution to science and technology, have in the final analysis admitted the existence of Reality behind all the world, which even scientific explorations cannot find out. In their opinion, the more the nature is explored, the more does its mystery deepen to baffle human intelligence. From this they affirm that Reality behind nature must be all the more baffling and mysterious. The scientist is, however, still baffled by subtle and super-sensuous planes of Reality, or super-consciousness and super-mind, which have only been felt and experienced by observation, meditation and reason, and which only the sense of intuition, when it opens, can take one to the

world of absolute Reality. The truth of Reality having been comprehended by concentrating on navel or on the point of nose in meditation, can not be understood or explained scientifically and mathematically.

Nevertheless, the truths which none can afford to ignore, at times bring out and reveal the mysteries of nature which science could not find, unless such truths and mysteries revealed by the mystics and saints to inspire and influence the scientists. The mention of *vimāna, agnibāṇa, cakra,* and *śakti* have been translated into physical forms of aeroplanes, missiles, bombs by scientists in modern age under the inspiration received from old scriptures and Vedas, *Mahābhārata,* and *Rāmāyaṇa.* Did not the Vedas thousands of years ago say that the human being is the result of evolution and that also after lakhs of rebirths which Darwin proved scientifically recently in the nineteenth century.

Anyhow Christianity recognizes the existence of reality of God and also Its eternal attributes and laws which operate in the world, some visible, some invisible, some open, and some mysterious. Christianity also like Śaiva saints and thinkers admits that Reality, unknown as It is, can be known and recognized when Its attributes and laws are understood, and when strictly followed by man. In

this way the conflicts and doubts arising within man himself and with people at large and also with society are subdued and controlled. The knowing and realizing of Reality is due to one's own effort and man in the ultimate analysis finds that he is that Reality. Thus Christianity also admits the final goal of man to be "I am He," "Thou art That."

This thought is the crux of all religions and the core idea of their philosophies. Ignoring different dogmas, myths, traditions, all the four religions stand on the same ground, on the core and central idea of Reality-Man-World and their interrelation. This opens the common ground in which spirit rules and is known as the realm of spirit as against matter.

11

Tantra and Miracles

EVEN AS THE smallest particles of elements in nature like sparks of fire, drops of water, breath, and sound are all anxious to merge with their respective sources, so is the individual soul, which is a spark of the Supreme Soul, anxious to merge with It. To understand the relationship of all the three entities of Śaiva philosophy, viz., Reality-Man-Universe and the way to realize and recognize this and finally merge with Śiva is therefore the objective goal of Kashmir Śaivism.

Upaniṣads have laid two paths for the people of the world: (i) *śreyas*, viz., the path leading to Self-realization and Reality, and (ii) *priya*, i.e., the path leading to the world and its objects. The

former has spirituality as its goal, and the latter has enjoyment of the world and its objects. Śaivism is an intermediary path leading to Super-consciousness on one side, and allowing the indulgence in the enjoyment of the world subject to certain mental, psychological and emotional disciplines and strict control of discrimination and thinking on the other side.

The Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* have classified all human beings into three temperamental categories according to *guṇas* of *sattva* (truth), *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (ignorance) in proportion to the respective predominance of each. People of *sattva guṇa* temperament, having the goal as spiritual realization, persue and take to *śreyas* path, while the people of *tamas* temperament remain enveloped in darkness and ignorance and hold fast to the world, and the people of *rajas* temperament are midway between the two with one eye on the world and one on Reality. The barriers and classes on the basis of *guṇas* are not rigid. A man of *tamas* temperament can go to *rajas* category and even to *sattva* category by God's grace or by the help and guidance of some developed soul, or under the effect of very strong shock, which gives him a jolt by stirring strong sense of non-attachment or *vairāgya.* Similarly, *rājasika* temperament can also aspire to go to *sāttvika* class and then follow the path of *śreyas.*

Mystics of all religions, who roam in spiritual realms, are as a rule those who originally belong to *sāttvika* temperament and those who persue *śreyas* path. They understand the working and functioning of Reality through Divine Energy, which functions as an integrated power and potentiality of forces and elements and compulsions in nature, both outside and inside man. Such mystics transcend the limitations of time, space and causality, become one with Reality and remain part and parcel of it. They cannot afford to keep aloof, and as such contribute of their own in supplementing the working of Nature. Such mystics get foresight, experience and insight into the truth and mysteries, but before they accept them and illustrate them, they do test them in the crucible of reason and discrimination. When satisfied on rational grounds that they are consistent with the working of Nature, these saints and mystics perform miracles by foreseeing, foretelling, foreboding the future, reading the past and witnessing the present, and finally by affording relief in deserving cases. The potentials and powers achieved by such mystics enable them to intervene in the working of Nature either by accelerating of the coming occurrences and events or by preventing and delaying or mitigating their effects. But even such inter-

vention of accelerating or delaying or mitigating events and occurrences have to be and must be consistent with the requirements and needs of Nature, and not go against normal functioning. Such mystics develop *vāk-siddhi* (what they speak comes to be true), *dṛṣṭi-siddhi* (power of look by which they cast their influence on environment).

It may be contended that the production of *vibhūti* or things by the wave of hand is to gain cheap popularity and is not consistent with detachment which is expected of a mystic or saint. People forget that to create faith in people, some such miracle has to be exhibited to attract them, and make them to listen to what such a mystic or saint has to tell them, how to live, what to believe, and how to raise one's nature and transform it to suit universal nature. Then only harmony and peace can be secured for man, for society and for environment in general. Did not Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Christ, and Mohammad perform miracles to attract people before their philosophic teachings could be accepted. If Sai Baba is doing the same thing, why should his miracles be thought to be cheap. So far as his person is not involved, and does not derive any material gains, his miracles are sincerely motivated, and so his intentions cannot be doubted. His aim is to deliver man and society from fundamentalism and dogmatism. In this way he wants people to come out of religious

bottlenecks and rise above. His preaching and teaching is on spiritual plane where all men are equal, as soul in them is similar and universal. This idea of soul or spirit is to be cultivated and its superiority over religion is to be admitted. Sai Baba's work in this behalf is spiritual, and all persons of all religions and castes attend his meetings and avail of his teachings.

He and his organization in this behalf are doing a lot of work for bettering man of any faith or religion. This is the need of the day if man and society are to be saved. Not only Sai Baba's organization but saints of Rama Krishna Mission are also doing a lot of good work in this behalf.

The writer had the good fortune of remaining in close contact with such a true mystic of Śaivism as Swami Gopi Nathji Bhan, generally known as "Bab" (father) or "Bhagavana" to believers and followers. Within the personal knowledge and experience of the writer, Bhagavana's three miracles are mentioned so as to show how miracles are performed.

1. During Pakistan's raid on Kashmir in 1947, a devotee of Bhagavana approached him on about tenth or eleventh October 1947 to find out if the marriage of his daughter, which was fixed months in advance to be celebrated on twenty-second October 1947, could be performed. Since the devotee was living in a part of Srinagar

city, which fell directly in the way of raiders just on entering the Srinagar city, and government had warned the people of the locality to vacate their houses and go to the interior of the city, the devotee and his family abandoned their house and went to densely populated locality as a precautionary measure. On the devotee's question and request on eleventh or twelfth of October, Bhagavana in simple language replied: The marriage will be performed on the fixed date, and that also in devotee's own house. The devotee, who had firm faith in the saint, returned next day to his house, and the marriage was performed on due date, even though the raiders were within a mile of his house on the twentieth and twenty-first of October 1947. Bhagavana had categorically said that raiders will not enter the city and exactly it happened that on the twenty-second morning Indian military planes hovered over the valley and straffed the enemy and enemy positions with the result that the raiders ran back for shelter and safety in confusion, and thus Srinagar was saved, and the marriage of the daughter of the devotee passed on, while the local Muslims offered and stood guard for three days and three nights at the house of the devotee.

2. A devotee was suffering from peptic ulcer which was thought incurable except by ope-

ration. Operation being thus unavoidable, date, time, bed, etc., were allotted and fixed by the surgeon. The devotee came on the evening of the day prior to the day of operation to inform Bhagavana and to seek his permission. When he put his request before Bhagavana, he categorically told him that there is to be no operation. The devotee could not rest content, as all preparations in the hospital were made, and he thought operation could not be put off. After some time, he again repeated his plea before Bhagavana who in a very serious voice, feeling a little peevish, said that I have already said there will be no operation and there will be none. The devotee left and the next day when he turned up at the fixed time at the hospital, the doctor said that operation is postponed as the room and bed meant for the devotee had already been allotted to a V.I.P. involved in a road accident during the night. The operation never came about so far and the patient is hale and hearty in his eighties.

3. An officer in government service, who also used to visit Bhagavana and was his devotee, came in official trouble and was suspended. He approached the saint. For some time it appeared that the saint did not take notice of him very much, but after three months one day he called him in his presence and asked him to go to *parikramā* (circumambulation) round Hari

Parbat Temple of Divine Energy in Srinagar for forty days. Only one month after this the officer was reinstated and the case against him was dropped.

In the days of wars with Pakistan and China in 1947, 1962 and 1965, this saint would abstain from food for days together, look gloomy and lost in his own thoughts. But one or two days before the wars had to cease or corner had to trun, of which nobody could foresee and forecast, suddenly he would get up laugh and cry that it is over. Within one or two days after this exhibition of joy, the news flashed that the ceasefire had taken place. It appears all the days of war he persued the events of war, and as such was sad and lost, but when revelation and intuition pointed out to him that it was over, the crises did really end. His expressions of joy and cries of happiness are understandable therefore.

An Indian Colonel in Chinese war after ceasefire ran upto Kashmir on leave. He was making enquiries about Kashmiri saints. The people took him personally to some available saints nearby. On reaching Bhagavana's *āśrama* and on seeing him the Colonel at once fell on Bhagavana's feet. Bhagavana smiled. Colonel then narrated his episode that this saint was in this dress on a wooden sandal, directing him on China front about the direction of firing and

march. He could not understand the phenomena, but somehow felt that he was to follow the instructions, which he actually did with the result that, inspite of being very close to enemy positions, he and his party remained safe, while nearby fortification and defences fell one after another.

Bhagavana Kashi Kaka of Manigaon, another mystic saint's miracle performed on the writer's cousin brother is worthy of mention. My cousin was suffering from T.B. at an advanced stage, and was declared hopeless by doctors and physicians. The father, mother and the other relatives of the patient went to request the saint. The saint came and put his own hand in the patient's hand, supported him and lifted him up, took him barefooted to a distance of about quarter of a mile where there is a Śiva temple and brought him back likewise, and laid him in the bed. All this was done by saint even though the relatives of the patient felt apprehensive. Surprisingly that very night temperature came down by he second degrees and within one week it was completely off. The patient became normal and lived upto eighties. These are just a few glimpses of miracles within the personal knowledge of the writer. Greater and surprising miracles have happened. So long as man is there, mystics will be there, miracles will happen and will be performed.

The faith generated by miracles has significant effect on the imagination of man whose religious vision opens and the spiritual aspect of the drama dawns on him. This has been proved amply by Saint Sai Baba and by the saints of Rama-Krishna Mission and by so many mystics and saints. The obvious and patent result is synthesis of people of different religions, faiths, and castes. In the past, from time to time, such mystics as Kabīra, Caitanya Mahā Prabhu, Guru Nānak, Tukā Rāma, and so many others have done the same thing, and saved the community and humanity from disintegration. This time the need is much more of such mystics and saints due to great scientific and technological explosion, and the greater race for material gains. As a result, non-believers, sceptics, and atheist are increasing. Crisis of faith has developed along with the crisis in the character of man. Man feels confused and lost.

Miracles attract such a confused man's imagination and he then finds some consolation from the miracles and saints. In this way he again comes to believe in God and superhuman phenomena.

12

Bhoga and Mokṣa

(Enjoyment and Salvation)

IN THE TRIAD of Śiva-Man-Universe, it is man who is the central figure juxtaposed between the two. Having identified himself with Śiva as explained in the foregoing chapter, his responsibility towards the universe, of which the world with all its animate and inanimate objects is only a part, has to be understood. All the empirical phenomena are there to suit and serve the purpose of man, who is the central figure. It automatically becomes incumbent upon man to see that this world, particularly this whole empirical phenomena in which he lives and from which he draws the sustenance, is taken proper care of and looked after to the best of his capacity.

The world is the expression of Śiva, and so is just like His garden not only to enable man to live in it, but also provide him with happiness and joy. So man's looking and caring for the world, and the world providing some sense of joy or satisfaction are therefore cause and effect of each other. The world as it is sets the environmental base in which man lives. To seek harmony and peace within himself, man's role in keeping and maintaining peaceful and harmonious environment is necessary. The responsibility of man becomes all the more great to fend and to take care of the world.

Man being responsible for proper care and development of the world, naturally also establishes his right to seek not only peace and harmony, but also to find joy and some sense of satisfaction and fulfilment while living in this world. Responsibility establishes right, and right involves responsibility.

This is the reciprocal relationship between man and the world, but unfortunately in working out this relationship man faces difficulties which are mainly three:

1. Man's fickle mind gets lured by the world's objects and gets stuck up with its attractions and forgets his responsibility.

2. He suffers on account of delusion, and mistakes the real for the unreal, and vice versa.

His responsibility gets therefore misplaced and misused.

3. Because of dualities in his own nature, and also because of the influence of *guṇas* or temperamental attributes if they are in disproportionate measure, man's thinking and actions get prejudiced, and as such he cannot faithfully and correctly fulfil his responsibility towards the world.

Therefore it becomes apparent that the control of mind and senses and the ability to see in right perspective and rising above the dualities and attributes inherent in one's nature, are needed for man to be able to discharge his responsibility and then enjoy the right that follows it.

Man has therefore to transform his perspective and nature so as to be fit to roam in the spiritual realm of Śiva-consciousness, and then he can enjoy the garden of Śiva, the world as it is. Responsibility precedes right in this case also, as it generally does in all forms of activity in life.

When man discharges his responsibility towards Śiva, the owner of the garden and the garden, then only he becomes deserving claimant to enjoy the world. To become a deserving aspirant for that enjoyment all the faculties and powers within man be so developed and harnessed as to enable him to build appropriate infrastructure

within himself in which his physical, mental, emotional and intellectual potentials and *śaktis* are so ingeniously integrated and harnessed that no negative force can disturb or mislead him. Then his indulgence in the enjoyment of the world, and to secure varied experiences conducive to joy and happiness can be correct and justified. Total compliance of moral and ethical norms of living, perfect control of the mind and senses, rising above the pressures and the influence of dualities and effects of attributes of *rajas* and *tamas*, and adhering scrupulously to the divine principles of truth, non-violence, peace, love, and sympathy are necessary pre-requisites for man to exercise his right of enjoyment of the world. Therefore this philosophy has laid a cardinal rule to guide man to indulge in the enjoyment of the world. These principles are needed, and are to be tested in the crucible of correct logic and rationality which has to be acquired and whose permissions must be sought before one indulges in enjoyment of any sort. Correct logic holds the key to the enjoyment and must be such as to satisfy all bio-psycho-intellectual conditions.

Of all religions of the world it is only Śaiva philosophy which gives permission to enjoy the world as a matter of right, leaving it to the individual to use his free will to determine what

should be enjoyed and what not, how enjoyment may be secured, and how not. While Vedānta may insist that the world is to be forgotten, and one should go in solitude, while other religions may prescribe in details dos and don'ts, Śaiva philosophy is the only philosophy which permits man to do anything, but subject to one and one rule—that whatever one does should be such as to be justifiable on logical and rational grounds, and should not break the harmony and peace of either man within himself or in environment. This freedom to enjoy, subject to correct logic, is there, as thinkers, seers, mystics, and saints of this philosophy had realized that by following Śaiva philosophy and by attaining realization of glim-pses of spiritual plane, man has developed self-confidence and self-reliance within himself, which is so strong as not to permit him to be swept off his feet. Even with the acquired self-confidence and self-reliance, this philosophy has insisted on total awareness, total alertness of life, so that man's intellect remains steadfast and on sure ground always. Preaching dos or don'ts, specifying permissible and impermissible actions or thinking, what to do and what not to do, is what other religions and philosophies have done, but one cardinal rule of Śaiva philosophy makes man his own judge and arbitrator, and leaves him free to think and do as he likes, and that is, whatever

he does and thinks, it stands the test of reason. Subject to the rule of reason, man is free to enjoy the world.

After one's death, rebirth according to one's actions in this world indicates that man is held responsible and accountable for his actions, good or bad, by all religions—Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or Christianity. To escape the consequences of the accounting of actions is not possible. For omission and commission, sins and vices, one has to suffer. For good and right done, one has to be compensated, even though doing good and right is one's duty. Reactions must follow actions and that is the law of Nature. Nobody can bypass the law. Hindus and Buddhists believing in the transmigration of soul after death, seek to be reborn, if at all they have to, where they be better placed, and in course of time, having paid and liquidated for all omissions and mistakes, their aim focusses on getting freedom from the universe, and thus bringing to an end the suffering and sorrows of life and the world. For Islam and Christianity the concepts of hell and heaven have been so construed as to affect human imagination, so that man is deterred from doing bad, and prompted only to do good. Both promise punishment and reward for actions, which is prescribed in Islam and Christianity, while Buddhism and Hinduism hold the

hope of better and worse future, based on actions, and finally freed from rebirth which is called "salvation."

Śaiva philosophy permits enjoyment of the world, subject to the control of reason and it is a very significant and meaningful state. It can be achieved only when entire bio-psychological and intellectual frame of man gets enlightened, which of its own will control his mind, his thinking, and his actions. When reason dawns, then naturally it is a conclusive evidence of man having liquidated all his sins of omission and commission of all lives. He then deserves to secure freedom from re-birth which is called "salvation." It, therefore, follows that enjoyment of this world and securing of salvation hereafter (*bhoga* and *mokṣa*) are assured under the one torch-light of *sat-tarka* (right reason). No dos and don'ts, rejections and admissions, no permissible and impermissible alternatives, are needed to be prescribed. To achieve *sat-tarka* and not to confuse it with restrictions and prohibitions because of fear of defamation or criticism, is not an ordinary job. Right Reason must hold its firm grip not only on actions, but its sway must be complete and strong on thought structure, intellect, emotions, so much so that it must be a part of individual consciousness from which *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* would get strength and stability.

When such a state of consciousness is deeply rooted and right logic is a part and parcel of it, then enjoyment of the world and attaining of salvation are assured.

Even when intuitional logic has been followed, perfect trait of one's consciousness, perfect awareness and alertness are still needed at all moments, otherwise one may be pushed back. Many a realized soul have fallen when alertness got relaxed or loosened.

When basic moral and ethical purity is lost, when environmental and social harmony is jeopardised, and when human relationship gets vitiated by hatred, jealousy, malice, ill will, falsehood, when one does not come out of the grip of greed, violence, anger, lust, attachment, and falsehood, there can be no happiness or satisfaction in the world, nor salvation or freedom in the next. This is an inexorable law of Nature. To deserve *bhoga* in the world and *mokṣa* hereafter, man has to pass through a severe and hard test in which negative forces have to be totally rejected one after another, and positive forces assimilated and absorbed, and with the beacon light of intuitional logic one can enjoy and indulge in what this world and hereafter have to offer him.

Even having highlighted intuitional logic and its attainment as a necessary condition, the philo-

sophers have not passed over the fallibility of correct logic of head before strong emotions of heart. After all, heart plays a strong role in one's life, sometimes stronger than even intellect, as love generated by heart is a force to reckon with. But since love, in ultimate analysis, cements and brings about union, so along with intuitional logic one has to see that his emotional frame is so developed that emotion accepts the superiority of the intellect and remains subordinate to it. This is very essential, otherwise emotion without control and subordination to intellect may lead one astray and one may get lost. Intellect and emotion both must embrace and go hand in hand when realization and union with Śiva is to be achieved. It is only then that *jīva* and Śiva can be one, and intuitional logic will be there and its efficacious role can be assured.

Index

Abhinavagupta 27
Abul Fazal 98
Advaita (Vedānta) 24–27, 31–32, 38
Afghanistan 12, 95
Āgamas 39–40
Ahmad Shah Abdali 95
Aitareya Upaniṣad 30
Akbar 95
Allāh 8
ānanda 40, 54
Anandaji, Swami 96
āṇava-mala 54, 70
āṇava-upāya 59–60
apāna 40
Āraṇyakas 32
Arjuna 33
Arya Dharma 12
Aryan/-s 12, 17, 19, 39
Aśoka 27, 36
ātmā 22, 34
Aurangzeb 95

Bacon 106
Baltistan 88, 90
Bhagavadgītā 33–34, 48, 101, 113
bhakti 30
Bhaktiyoga 40
bhoga 127–28
bindu 49
Brahmā 37–38, 44
Brāhmaṇa/-s 19, 90
Brahman 8, 23, 25, 49; as Reality 26; existence of 24
brahmarandhra 71
Brahmasūtras 25, 38
Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 30
Buddha 12, 35–36
buddhi 34, 71–72, 78
Buddhism 8, 12–13, 26–28, 36–37, 90, 104, 127; practices of 36
Buddhist/-s 14, 27, 37, 90, 105

cakra/-s 40, 110
cakkri 101
Central Asia 12, 88
Ceylon 12, 27
Chāndogyopaniṣad 30
China 12, 27

Chinese 119
Chingiz Khan 88
Christ/-ians 12, 105, 115
Christianity 8, 12, 104, 106, 110–11, 127
consciousness 3, 18, 22, 25, 40, 50–55, 60–63, 66, 68, 73, 80; of man 70–71
cosmos 5, 18, 21, 23–24, 34, 42, 45, 48, 56, 71–72, 76–77

Dardi 100
Darwin 109–10
Delhi 95
devotion 30; aspect of 30
dharma 32, 36, 38
Divine Energy. *See* Śiva and Śakti
Dīwān-i-Hāfiz 101
Dīwān-i-Sa'dī 101
Dogra 95–96, 99
Dravidians 39

Egypt 12
Einstein 109
Europe 12

Fatah Kadal 92
freedom 9, 56

Gandhi, Mahatma 100
Ganj Bakhsh 94
Ghazani, Mahmūd of 88
God 4, 7, 9, 13–14, 17, 21, 23, 28, 31, 33, 37, 107, 109, 121; acceptance of 105; denial of 14; faith in 108; identity with 93; Kingdom of 105; son of 105; status of 33; worship of 5
Godhead 28, 30; principle of 28
Gopinathji, Swami 96, 116
guṇa/-s 34–35, 59, 79, 113
Guru Nanak 121

Hamdani, Shah Ali 91, 93
Hamdani, Syed Mohammad 93. *See also* Hamdhan
Hamdhan 91
Hari Parbat Temple 118–19
Hegel 106
hell and heaven 4; concept of 4
Himalaya 37
Hindu /-s 13, 20, 23–24, 34, 36, 38, 90–92, 94–98, 100–101, 105
Hinduism 8–9, 17, 104, 127
Huns 89

I-consciousness 55–57, 60, 62, 69, 70
icchā-śakti 54, 72, 76
ignorance 53, 55
India/-n 12, 17, 27–28, 31, 37–39, 106, 117, 119
Indonesia 12, 27
Indra 38
Iran 12, 89
Īśa Upaniṣad 30

Ishbar 96
Islam 8, 91–93, 104, 106, 127
Īśvara 8, 28, 37, 55

Jahangir 95
Jaina/-s 8–9
japa 48
Japan 12, 27
Jerusalem 12
jīva(-ātmā) 23, 52, 63–64, 66, 69, 72–73
jīvanmukta 66
jñāna-śakti 54, 72, 76
Jñānayoga 40
Judaism 12
Jvālā. *See* Śakti
Jyeṣṭhā. *See* Śakti

Kabīra 121
Kabul 95
Kailāsa 37
Kallaṭa 27, 74, 81
Kañcuka/-s 61, 70
Kaniṣka 27
Kant 106
karma/-s 9, 40, 72
Karmakāṇḍa 21, 30
kārma-mala 54, 70
Kashgar 12
Kashkak, 96
Kashmir 36–39, 71, 81, 88, 94–95, 119; climate of 42; history of 89; people of 36, 44; Raja of 89; seers of 73; spread in 36; Sultan of 95; Raja Sahadeva of 89
Kashmir (Śaivism) 27–28, 36, 39–41, 50
Kashmiri Śaiva 11, 38, 42, 81
Kaṭha Upaniṣad 30
Kena Upaniṣad 30
Khanqah Mu'alla 92
Kingdom of Heaven 10
knowledge 30, 32, 34, 54–55, 109; supremacy of 32
Kohistani 100
Kols 38
Kota Rani 90
Krama 80
kriyā-śakti 54, 72, 76
Kṛṣṇa 33, 35, 48, 115
Kṣatriya 19
Kublai Khan 88
Kulācāra 81
kuṇḍalinī-śakti 72, 82, 87
Kushan/-s 89

Ladakh 88; Raja of 88
Lakṣmaṇajī, Swami 96
Lallā 92, 94
Lar Pargana 89
life, 3, 11, 35, 52, 83, 192; description of 32; spiritual way of 35

Madeen Sahib 94
Mahābhārata 32, 33, 110
Mahāprabhu Caitanya 121
Malaysia 12
man 5–6, 9, 14–15, 20, 22, 34, 43, 58, 60, 63, 107–8,

122–24; consciousness of 70–71; enemies of 34; inner nature of 5; potentialities of 13; purpose of 123; five enemies of 84
Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad 30
mantra/-s 60, 71, 83
Masnawi-yāt-i-Rūmī 101
māyā 25–26, 56–57, 59, 61–62, 64; conquest of 67
māyīya-mala 54, 70
māyā śakti 54–55, 70, 76–78
meditation 18, 54, 71, 110
Mehtab Kak 96
mind 8, 22, 53, 63, 70, 72–73, 99, 123; control of 8, 87; force of 57
Mitra 38
Mohammad 115
mokṣa 128–29
Mongol 88–89
mukti 9
Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 30
Muslim/-s 13, 88, 90, 97, 99–100, 105

nāda 49
Nadir Shah 95
Napoleon 108
nature 4, 21, 24, 42, 58, 127; elements in 4; law of 127; principle in 13
Newton 109
nimeṣa 70–71
nirvāṇa 9
Nishat 96
Noor-ud-din, Sheikh 92
Nyāya 21

Pakistan 99, 113, 119
Plalestine 12
Pañcastavī 73
Pandora's box 5
Paramānanda 96
Paramātmā 8, 22–23, 30
parā-śakti 57
Pārvatī 37
pāśa 41
paśu 41
Patañjali 23
pati 41
Persia(-n) 91, 98, 100
prakāśa 52, 54–57, 68, 84, 128
prakṛti 21
prāṇa 40, 56, 69, 72, 81–83
Praśna Upaniṣad 30
Pratyabhijñā 43, 60, 64, 65
Purāṇa/-s 32, 38
Puruṣa 21
Pūrvamīmāṁsā 21

Qutb-ud-din, Sultan 91

rajas 34, 59, 79, 113, 125
Rājñī. *See* Śakti
Ram Chand 89–90
Ramji, Swami 96
Ram (Krishna Mission) 32–33, 115, 118, 121
Rāmānuja 41
Rāmāyaṇa 32, 110
Reality, 7–11, 14–16, 20–21,

23–25, 31, 37, 41, 50, 52, 68, 73, 92, 98, 105, 110, 114; approach to 26; attributes of 107; concept of 25; oneness of 99; planes of 109; philosophy of 11; realization of 25, 63, 107; truth of 110; union with 67
Resurrection 9
Ṛgveda 38
Rinchen 89–90
Roman Empire 12
Rudra 38–39

sādhaka 63
sādhanā/-s 40, 52, 63
Sai Baba 115–16, 121
Śaiva/-s 26–28, 36–38, 42–44, 49, 54, 59, 64, 69, 74, 80, 89–90, 94, 96–98, 102–3, 106–7, 110, 112, 125, 127–28; ideas of 36
Śaiva Siddhānta 39–41
Śaivism 26, 39, 93, 96, 113, 116; of Kashmir 74; philosophy of 26
śākta-upāya 59–60
Śakti 71–73, 80–83; in Kashmir recognized five forms of 81; assumes many forms 76
śakti/-s (energy, power) 54, 57, 76, 110
Śaktivāda 80–81
samādhi 40, 68
śāmbhava-upāya 59–60
Sanātana Dharma 12; of Hindus 12
Śaṅkara(-ācārya) 24–27, 31–32, 37
Sāṅkhya 21, 23–24, 31, 55
Śārikā. *See* Śakti
sattva 59, 79, 113
Schopenhaur 106
Shah Jahan 95
Shah Mir 89–91
Shams-ud-din 91
Siddha 57
Sikandar Khan, Sultan 93
Sikh 95–96
Śiva 8, 36–40, 43–45, 49–50, 52, 60, 63–69, 72–73, 77, 79, 84, 122, 124, 130; attribute of 42; consort of 78, 81; emergence of 71; energy of 75; expression of 70–71, 123; pulsation of 69; state of 55; withdrawal of 71
Śivasūtra 27
Somānanda 27
Spanda 43, 69–71, 74–75, 80, 98; doctrine of 71
Spandakārikā 27
Spandasūtras 80
Spinoza 106–7
spirit 7, 10, 45, 53, 55, 62, 66, 111, 116
spiritual(-ity) 7, 10, 23, 69–70, 113
Srinagar 90, 92, 116, 119

Śrīvara 94
Śūdra 19–20
suffering 4, 20; cause of 35; evils of 4
Sufi 91, 97–98, 103; thought/ideology 91, 93–95; concept of *Anal-haq* 93
suṣumṇā 71
svabhāva 58

tamas 34, 59, 79, 113, 125
Taoism 12
Thailand 27
Tibet 27, 88
time 4, 19, 57, 79; passage of 4, 35
titikṣā 20
Trika 44–45, 98
Tripurā. *See* Śakti
Tukārāma 121
Turkey 121

Universal Consciousness 53–55, 61, 65, 80
unmeṣa 70–71
Upaniṣad(-s) 29–31, 33, 36, 101, 113
upāyas 59
Utpaladeva 27

vairāgya 113
Vaiṣṇava/-s 31
Vaiśya 19
Vaiśeṣika 21
vanvun 101
Vasugupta 27, 81
Vedānta 21, 23–26, 30, 37, 40, 63, 126
Vedāntic 31
Veda/-s 17, 21, 23, 29–30, 32–33, 110
Vedic 12, 17, 28–29, 36–37, 101
vimarśa 52, 54–57, 68–69, 76, 84, 128
Viṣṇu 37–38, 44

Yajurveda 38
Yoga 21, 23–24, 31, 52, 84
Yusuf Shah 94

The goal and purpose in writing this book is to highlight, in the midst of diversity, the essential unity that seems to be constitutive of such religions that have an orientation that is deeply mystical. Basing himself on the absolutistic metaphysical thought of Kashmir Śaivism, the author thereby has attempted to interpret spirituality in such universal terms as would enable one to discover the principle of unity of Being among the spiritualities of all major religions. Thus the aim of the book is so noble as to allow the reader to have the vision of unity in the midst of diversity.

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